

صباحنا من الامم



THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,191

SATURDAY 11 JANUARY 1997

WEATHER: Rain, sleet or snow

(IR 65P) 60p

Waynetta Sloan
The untold story
EXCLUSIVE!!!
The **eye**

Michael Flatley
The Lord of
self control

Consumer's
Winners of
personal

THE LONG WEEKEND



Awakening: Darcy Russell rehearsing the lead role in the Royal Ballet's *Sleeping Beauty*, which has music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, choreography by Marius Petipa and designs by Maria Bjornson. Anthony Dowell's production opens at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, central London, today. Photograph: Laurie Lewis

Building society gold rush dwarfs Eighties bonanza

Michael Harrison, Peter Rodgers and Gill Treanor

The £20bn giveaway of shares in the Halifax and other building societies in coming months is set to dwarf the instant profits made during the Thatcher privatisation years, boosting the feel-good factor in the run-up to the general election and beyond.

Between a third and a half of the adult population will share the bonanza, with most hand-outs in the region of £500 to £2,000. Under the terms of the Halifax flotation announced yesterday, 8.5 million people will receive shares worth an average of £1,300 in June. Just over four million will receive the minimum allocation of 200 free shares worth between £780 and £900. The rest will receive this plus an additional hand-out of up to 981 shares, depending on the balance in their accounts on two key dates.

Members can vote by post by 17 February or in person at the special general meeting in Sheffield on 24 February. More than 50 per cent of the society's investing members - over 3.3 million - must vote in favour for the flotation to proceed.

The other building societies lining up to convert from mutual status include the Woolwich, which is paying out shares worth £3bn, and the Alliance and Leicester, which will be worth £2.5bn. The total amount being distributed to savers and borrowers in the next 10 months will be equivalent to 10p off the basic rate of income tax for one year and four to five times as large as the highest Budget handouts ever seen.

Economists forecast yesterday that the giveaway would boost consumer spending by between £6bn and £8bn, with roughly two-thirds of the free shares saved and one-third cashed in and spent on holidays, home improvements, clothes and the like.

The £20bn in free shares compares with the estimated £6bn that investors could have made by cashing in their shares in privatised companies immediately after flotation.

Whereas about 10 million people have benefited from the £6bn privatisation programme since 1979, nearly twice that number will benefit from the building society giveaways. Nor does the £20bn figure include the £4bn flotation of the insurance company, Norwich Union, scheduled for summer, or the £3.2bn of cash and shares already handed over to consumers from earlier building society flotations and takeovers.

Simon Briscoe, economist at the Japanese securities house Nikko said the boost to the economy, although small in comparison with total annual consumer expenditure of £550bn, would increase pressure for higher rates. Other economists warned an increase in base rates was very likely, given that the building society windfall would lift the growth in consumer spending to even more unsustainable levels.

David Walton of investment bankers Goldman Sachs said: "Households with the right building society accounts will gain this year but those consumers with borrowings will lose out." Other City experts fear that the legacy of the instant windfall payouts will be dearer home loans as quoted building societies are forced to raise mortgage rates so they can afford to make dividend payments to shareholders. Economists believe that the conversion of building societies will do the same for consumer



confidence as did council house sales in the early 1980s and privatisation in the late 1980s.

The impending flood of financial institutions on to the stock market is reckoned to be one reason why the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, calculated he could get away with consumer tax cuts of just £750m in last November's Budget.

Kevin Gardner, chief economist at the US bank Morgan Stanley, said: "This is all part of the ongoing story of improving consumer confidence. The building society giveaways are the icing on the cake, but the cake was already pretty big already."

If the entire £20bn were cashed in, it would be enough to finance the entire country's high-street shopping for seven weeks and would give a boost to the economy four or five times as large as the biggest Budget handouts ever seen. This would almost certainly lead to a raging boom and a leap in inflation, and force the Government to raise interest rates sharply.

Nikko's consumer research found that one in six would spend their windfall, but the older and wealthier who generally get the largest payouts were more likely to save it. The evidence so far is that consumers are likely to react cautiously. Last year, there were building society windfalls totalling £3.2bn when Cheltenham & Gloucester was taken over by Lloyds Bank and National & Provincial by Abbey National. But only 16 per cent of N&P shares were cashed in.

David Owen, an economist at Kleinwort Benson, said this probably boosted growth by about 0.5 per cent, and he expects a further 0.5 to 0.75 per cent this year as a result of the renewed windfalls.

Only one society, the Alliance & Leicester, will have paid its members before the likeliest election dates in April and May. But the Halifax flotation - the biggest, with a handout of more than £11bn - the Woolwich flotation and the Bristol & West takeover by Bank of Ireland will issue payments shortly afterwards, in June and July.

Halifax details, page 18

Is this the first woman author in Britain?
The answer is on page 6

QUICKLY

Empress bungle
A catalogue of avoidable failures, bungled bureaucracy and allegations of financial loss turned the Sea Empress accident into a disaster, according to a report. **Page 2**

Patten challenged
Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten was facing a serious challenge over allegations that senior immigration officials were involved in corruption and that officials lied about whether he was fired. **Page 11**

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Dying cancer patient chained to bed

Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

An inquiry has been ordered into why a dying cancer patient was chained to his hospice bed by prison officers despite pleas from his mother and doctors.

Geoffrey Thomas, 25, who was awaiting trial for burglary, was only unshackled three hours before he died of stomach cancer. One ankle had been chained to the bed, but the shackle was transferred to his wrist after his ankle became swollen. He had been guarded at the hospice near Cardiff by two prison officers but was unable to walk.

The Prison Service said last night that it was setting up an inquiry into the use of restraints on prisoners. This follows a series of cases involving handcuffed women being taken to hospital to give birth and for breast cancer treatment.

Marina Davies, the mother of Mr Thomas said of her son yesterday: "He should have been allowed to die with dignity. He couldn't even walk, let alone escape."

She added: "I begged them to take the handcuffs and chain off but they wouldn't listen. The guards wouldn't even listen to the doctors. It is an inhuman way to treat a man who is dying. There is no way in the world he could escape. My son was dying in front of our very eyes."

Mr Thomas was arrested in October accused of stealing a video recorder, radio and a telephone in a burglary at a house in his home town of Caerphilly, South Wales, and remanded in custody.

He was taken ill on 23 December and admitted to the city's University Hospital of Wales where he was found to be in the final stages of stomach cancer. He was transferred to the Marie Curie cancer hospice at Holme Tower, Penarth, on New Year's Day to control his pain.

Despite his rapidly deteriorating condition and repeated requests from doctors for him to be unshackled, he was kept manacled. Two days after his arrival, on Friday, 3 January, a bail application was made in the morning. The chains were taken off at 11am on grounds of compassion and he died at 1.45pm.

Professor Iona Finlay, Holme Tower's medical director, yesterday criticised the attitude of the prison service. She said: "I think it's desperately sad ... Mr Thomas couldn't have run away anywhere. He needed help to sit up in bed."

Last night the Prison Service ordered an inquiry, saying it "very much regretted" Mr Thomas's death.

Hey Jimmy: heard about the minister who thinks most beggars are Scots?



The row over the homeless was fuelled by the Home Office minister David Maclean last night when he claimed that most beggars are Scots who sleep rough out of choice.

The Scots-born MP for Penrith and the Border described the beggars who asked him for money in London as "a disgrace" and an "embarrassment". Opposition parties called his remarks an "insult to fellow Scots".

Mr Maclean said of beggars: "I always give them something - I give them a piece of my mind. Most of them are Scottish and I've never met one yet who politely and gently asked

for money. There are no genuine beggars. Those who are in need have got all the social benefits they require."

"Every time we go and check, we find they won't go in hostels. Beggars are doing so out of choice because they find it more pleasant."

His comments, made to the *News & Star* newspaper in Carlisle, come just days after the Prime Minister accused the Labour leader, Tony Blair, of "hypocrisy" for appearing to back New York-style "zero tolerance" policies against beggars.

John Major said Mr Blair had changed his tune, and had originally denounced the Govern-

ment for backing such tough measures. Mr Blair has said he does not give cash to beggars, but that he buys *The Big Issue* magazine for the homeless and wants to see proper provision to take them off the streets.

Labour frontbencher Henry McLeish said yesterday: "David Maclean's comments are disgraceful and an insult to fellow Scots. Mr Maclean's comments speak volumes about the Tory Government. This Government has a cure-nothing, do-nothing attitude, and seeks only scapegoats, not solutions."

But Mr Maclean said he was often accosted by aggressive Scottish beggars and drunks,

who frightened visitors in London, and added: "Maybe my ears are more attuned to the Glasgow accent." However, he praised sellers of *The Big Issue* and people who cleaned car windscreens at traffic lights, saying they were doing a "good job" and "doing their bit to help themselves".

Alex Salmond, leader of the Scottish National Party, also denounced Mr Maclean, saying: "It's insulting to Scots and irresponsible." He accused Tory and Labour politicians of "picking on unfortunate people in their cheap tawdry for votes".

Last night, government and Tory party sources said the minister stood by his remarks.

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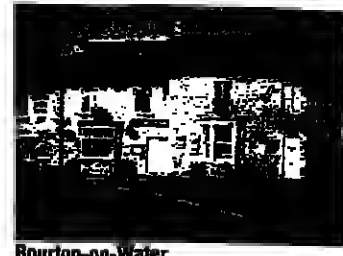
THE INDEPENDENT



INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

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Full details and a list of participating Minotel hotels will be printed on Sunday 12 January and Monday 13 January.



Bourton-on-Water



Anglesey



Northumbria



York



Bedford



Bleak midwinter: A flock of geese head east over Essex. A fortnight's ban on shooting wildfowl was imposed yesterday by the Department of the Environment to help safeguard birds enfeebled or unable to feed properly because of the freezing temperatures. Weather forecast, The Long Weekend, page 25 Photograph: Brian Harris

Bungle led to tanker disaster

James Cusick

A catalogue of avoidable failures, bungled bureaucracy and allegations of financial loss turned the *Sea Empress* accident into a disaster, according to a leaked report.

The draft document, leaked to the BBC and due to be published within the next two months by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch, has put the Government under considerable pressure to review procedures designed to protect the coastline from pollution threats.

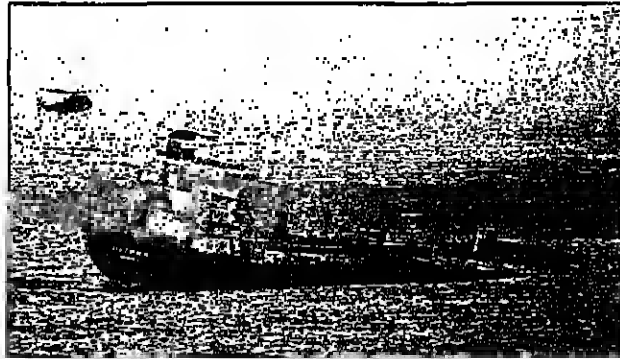
Although the shipping minister, Lord Goschen, criticised the leaked information and the furore it has caused as "inappropriate and premature", opposition politicians described the leak's content as "deeply disturbing" and called on the Government to take immediate action to ensure future co-ordination salvage operations.

The 147,000-tonne *Sea*

Empress, which sailed under a Liberian flag of convenience, ran aground off Milford Haven in south-west Wales in February last year. Ferrying crude oil from Scotland, the tanker failed to manoeuvre correctly into the two-mile wide entrance to the refinery.

A pilot was on board as she approached the harbour, but she still hit the rocks. The charts he was following are said to have been inaccurate.

According to the BBC's account of the draft report, "time-consuming and unnecessary bureaucratic procedures" resulted in the ship being grounded for seven days rather than two. The ship was carrying almost 130,824 tonnes of oil and spewed 70,000 tonnes into the sea. The massive spill, the full environmental impact of which is still to be evaluated, cost United Kingdom taxpayers an estimated £10m. Marine scientists are still studying the effects, especially those on two sea-bird

The *Sea Empress*: Failed to negotiate harbour entrance

colonies in the area which are among Europe's most valuable. Environmentalists say that the overall biological damage may not be fully understood for another decade.

When the report is published it is expected to say that the navigational charts around the mouth of the harbour were inadequate and not up to date. Inaccurate information was alleged to have been given on

the tides and the rescue operation is described as "salvage by committee".

Commenting on the report, Captain Ian Evans, a former marine safety adviser, said that a captain of a local pilot ship had told the salvage operators that the *Sea Empress* could have been moved in two days after the initial grounding. The advice was ignored.

In the accepted clean-up,

500 tonnes of chemical dispersant was used, the largest volume ever in a UK rescue.

Guy Linley-Adams, conservation director at the Marine Conservation Society, claimed that the first priority when the ship ran aground was finance. "We should never again allow the financial liabilities to cloud the judgement of those seeking to save a stricken and heavily laden tanker," Mr Linley-Adams says. The Government should now adopt a "command system" similar to that used in France where one person is appointed overall controller of a disaster with full authority that cannot be overridden by insurers' demands.

Labour's transport spokesman, Andrew Smith, described the draft as "deeply disturbing". He added: "It is alarming that the charts for the approaches to Britain's biggest oil port are reported to be inaccurate." He urged Sir George Young, the Secretary of State for Transport,

to ensure checks were made "on the accuracy of charts for the approaches to other ports and heavily trafficked sea-lanes".

Yesterday it remained possible that the report would have altered conclusions. Captain Peter Marriott, Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents, and one of the report's authors, said he was required to consult "those whose reputations may be adversely affected by my report". He added: "Until I have had an opportunity to consider any comments I receive from the individuals concerned my report cannot be finalised."

The report is also highly critical of the competence of harbour pilots, revealing that "the training and examination of pilots at Milford Haven are unsatisfactory". John Pearn, a pilot who was on board when the ship grounded, was initially suspended but back handling super-tankers after being reinstated by Milford Haven Port Authority.

significant shorts

Butcher accused over E.coli deaths

The butcher at the centre of the food poisoning outbreak which has left 16 pensioners dead appeared in court yesterday to face a charge of culpable and reckless conduct.

John Barr, of Wisbaw, Lancashire, appeared on petition at Hamilton Sheriff Court to face the charge which arises from the alleged supply by him of cooked meat from his shop. After the hearing, the Scottish Office released a statement which said Barr was committed for further examination and released on bail.

The statement said: "The Lord Advocate has emphasised to the procurator fiscal at Hamilton and Crown counsel that the public interest demand that in this case investigations be concluded without delay and that any trial should proceed as soon as possible."

Ian Burrell

Train driver charged with manslaughter

The driver of a train that collided with an empty passenger service near Watford Junction station was charged yesterday with manslaughter and endangering the safety of passengers.

Peter Afford, 56, from Bushey, Hertfordshire, a driver employed by North London Railways, has been bailed to appear at Watford Magistrates Court on 4 April. One woman died and more than 70 people were injured in the collision on 8 August last year. Transport police said they had carried out an inquiry into the collision, and after consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service had decided to bring charges.

Flu 'epidemic' downgraded

New influenza figures suggest "unusual activity" and some regional epidemics but no national epidemic of flu or flu-like illness, according to the latest surveillance figures.

The Royal College of General Practitioners' monitoring unit in Birmingham says there are now 230 cases per 100,000 of the population. The previous week's figure - for Christmas and New Year - was 122 per 100,000 - but this was artificially low because GP surgeries were closed for the holiday.

Dr Douglas Fleming, director of the unit, said the current rate was "within the range of usual winter activity". A flu epidemic has recently been redefined as more than 400 per 100,000 cases per population; above 200 per 100,000 is considered "unusual activity". *Li: Hum*

Family visit for nurses in Saudi

The families of two British nurses held in Saudi Arabia accused of murder are set to visit them in jail tomorrow.

Lucille McLaughlin, 31, from Dundee, and Deborah Parry, 41, from the Midlands are accused of killing 55-year-old Australian nurse Yvonne Gilford. The visit has been part arranged by Dundee West MP Ernie Ross who is a personal friend of the Saudi ambassador.

Man accused of IRA attack

A man was due to appear in court today in connection with Monday's IRA rocket attack outside the Royal Courts of Justice in Belfast. The 27-year-old man is accused of conspiracy to murder.

Meanwhile, another five men are being questioned by detectives in Belfast in connection with the attack and the co-ordinated IRA car bombing of the Army's Northern Ireland headquarters last October when 31 people were injured. One soldier later died.

BT pioneers alert system

The Home Office is studying a new disaster warning system which could ring thousands of homes simultaneously in a major emergency.

Computer engineers at BT have come up with a hi-tech replacement for the old civil defence air raid sirens in use since the Second World War. The proposed system, controlled from a central terminal, would alert

householders in any affected areas with a recorded alert and advice message. It could be used in the case of floods, factory explosions or radioactive leaks from nuclear power stations.

If approved, BT's Public Warning and Information (By Telephone) System would cost about £1.2m for each county to install.

£4m payout for dinner ladies

Some 1,500 dinner ladies are set to share £4m in an out-of-court settlement of an equal pay dispute. The women, formerly employed by the now defunct Cleveland County Council, will receive payouts ranging between £600 and £5,400.

Their claims - comparing their wages with those of gardeners and refuse collectors who earned up to 40 per cent more - were lodged 18 months ago at industrial tribunals. *Barrie Clement*

Ballooningists in new attempt

A Swiss-Belgian team of ballooningists is preparing to launch late today from Chateau-d'Oex, near Gstaad in Switzerland, in an attempt to fly non-stop around the world - just days after Richard Branson, boss of the Virgin group, almost died in a similar attempt.

The two-stroop team will fly in a balloon of the same design as that used by the Virgin team, though much smaller and lighter. Meanwhile Steve Fossett, an American millionaire stock trader, was waiting in St Louis, Missouri to make an attempt on the same record. *Charles Arthur*

Barclays renew libel claim

Millionaire press baron twis David and Frederick Barclay are making another attempt to sue BBC Director General John Birt for libel in France.

In July last year, a court in St Malo dismissed the reclusive brothers' claim for damages following a broadcast on BBC Radio Guernsey in October 1995 in which the Barclays claim they were falsely accused of corruption. Last summer, the court threw out their case - in which the Barclays claimed £108,000 damages - on the grounds that it was "unacceptable". The date fixed for the appeal decision is 24 January. *Tim Finin*

Schoolboy told to grow his hair

A 12-year-old schoolboy has been isolated by teachers at Corpus Christi High School, Preston, because his hair is too short. Leon Carlisle has been told he will be separated from his classmates, to work in a room alone until his hair grows to "a decent length". His father is fighting the ban and says his son's hair is merely neat and tidy.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

Recycled paper made up 41.2% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1996

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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Paedophile driven out of council home

A convicted paedophile was yesterday driven out of the council accommodation where he was living, following a warning to schools by the local education authority.

The man was taken away from a bed-and-breakfast on the Raploch estate near Stirling, Central Scotland, after a protest by about 35 angry parents. Police and council officials decided to move him because of concerns about his personal safety.

The case is the latest in the debate about whether convicted sex offenders should be allowed to live in the community and if so, whether parents should be told.

The demonstration followed a recent warning to 12 local schools by Stirling Council. It did not name the man, but he has been named locally as Alan Christie, 50, who was released from prison in October after being jailed for a year at Stirling Sheriff Court last April, when he admitted lewd and libidinous conduct towards a girl of four. The court heard it was not his first offence and there were fears he could re-offend.

A council spokesman said the man would be rehoused else-

where: "He does not have anywhere to live and under homeless legislation we have to find him somewhere to live. Where he was is now intolerable," he said.

He added that the man could be taken to another part of Scotland.

"There is an arrangement with other local authorities for emergency situations where we have to move someone elsewhere quickly."

Mothers expressed relief that he had been forced to leave the area. Lesley Marshall, 27, who has four young children said: "Families did not let their kids out on Thursday night when we found out he was here... We're just absolutely relieved he's gone."

The council defended its decision to advise local schools in December that a convicted paedophile was living in the area.

The education services director, Gordon Jeyes, said the council issued the alert as a "prudent" precaution.

The case comes two days after a council official in Birmingham faced disciplinary action for allegedly alerting mothers on a Birmingham council estate that a paedophile was moving

into the area. Mike Wood, a housing officer for the city council, allegedly tipped off mothers on the estate in Garrett's Green that George Taylor, who had been jailed for indecent assault on a young girl, was moving into the area.

Yesterday housing chiefs in Birmingham were said to be considering banning known child sex offenders from the city's 97,000 council homes.

The local authority in Middlesbrough has also announced that it will formally exclude sex offenders from estates. And last November head teachers at a group of primary schools in South Wales wrote to parents warning about a paedophile who moved into the area. The teachers passed on details of the man's appearance, type of car and vehicle registration number after police tipped off the local education authority.

Last December, ministers announced that paedophiles and other sex offenders will have to register their addresses with the police and that they were also considering a system from the United States in which communities were informed when paedophiles moved into the district.

صكتا من الامم

Princess Gwenllïan: Died fighting the Normans near Kidwelly in 1136

The White Book of Rhydderch: The oldest copy of the Four Branches of the Mabinogion. Photograph: Bob Stratton

Princess Gwendolien, daughter of Gruffudd ap Cynan, King of Gwynedd, was born in 1098, when Wales was under attack by the Normans. Gwendolien's brother, Owen Gwynedd, took over from his father and became one of the great Welsh princes. Gwendolien married and lived in the valleys around Dinewhr, then dense with protective forests. Here she raised her four sons, Morgan, Maelgwn, Maredudd and Rhys. On New Year's Day 1136 an attack was launched on the Normans and her husband led to join the battle. While he was away, the Norman-backed Lord of Kidwelly attacked, and Gwendolien led the defense. Although her youngest son was "only four years of age," Cambrensis, writing later that century, said: "She marched like the Queen of the Amazons and a second Penelope led a leading army." Gwendolien was killed on the battlefield, Maes Gwendolien, which has never been the same. The naming her as author of *The Four Branches of the Mabinogi* is likely to renew interest in a princess some historians have compared to Boudicca.

Birth (Mrs/Ms) / / 19

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DIC-01

Andrew Brown

Battle Element
Labour Editor

Leaders of the 1,400 distribution workers voted by a 72 per cent majority to strike and by 85 per cent in favour of industrial action short of stoppages. An overtime ban and work to rule will begin next Friday, followed by 48-hour walk-outs on 23 and 24 January, and on 7 February.

Tradetec, the company that distributes Bass products, will seek an injunction early next week alleging the disagreement does not constitute a lawful trade dispute. The distribution company, 49 per cent owned by



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concerns of a woman writer in matters like child-bearing, childlessness, wet-nursing, fostering and the upbringing of children, all of which figure in the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*. The author is also very good at describing women who get men out of mess.

"The *Four Branches* can be seen as that very rare thing, a feminist fairy story in which the roles are reversed and it is resourceful princesses who rescue princes." In his book, *Mediaeval Welsh Literature*, Dr

and I keep an open mind because there are so many possibilities. This will be the first time a woman has been suggested."

Dr Sioned Davies, senior lecturer in Welsh at the University of Wales, Cardiff, who is translating the *Mabinogion*, said: "I'd like to think it was a woman, but there is no firm evidence on authorship and a lot of prose of this period is anonymous. He is bringing up some very interesting points and I do not rule it out but I really need to see his arguments first."

Inquiry into fatal ambulance delay

An inquiry has been launched into why a dying man who was turned away from one hospital took six hours to arrive at another 50 miles away — only to die shortly afterwards.

Tony Usher, 60, died of heart failure and pneumonia on New Year's Eve after the ambulance transferring him from Joyce Green Hospital in Dartford, Kent — where there were no intensive care beds available — to the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital in Margate got into difficulties in the freezing conditions.

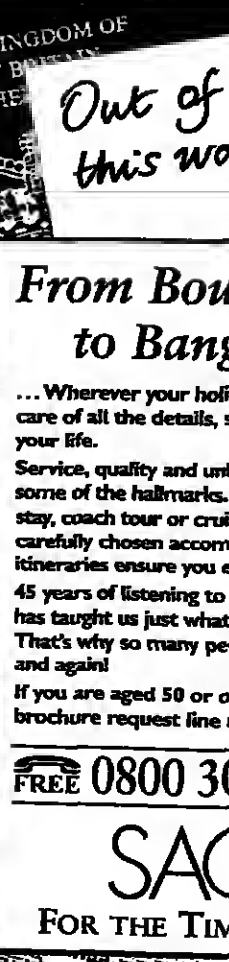
At 6.45am he was put in an ambulance to begin the journey to Margate. His wife, Georgina, was told she could not travel with him. During the 50-mile journey, the ambulance carrying Mr Usher had to stop because of wintry conditions and the crew diverted to the Medway Hospital in Gillingham. After spending more than

three hours at the Medway Hospital, he was transferred to Margate at 12.25pm. He was pronounced clinically dead shortly afterwards.

Now his widow is demanding to know why it took so long for her husband to arrive at the hospital, after she made the same journey in two hours. She said: "We knew my husband was dying but we would have liked him to die in dignity, with his family around him, not in an ambulance on his own."

A spokesman for Joyce Green Hospital said they had launched an inquiry into the matter.

An Ambulance Service spokesman said: "En route to Margate hospital the bad conditions caused the windscreen washer on the ambulance to freeze up... and the decision was made to divert to Medway for the patient to receive continuing care in the warm."



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Church talks priest mistrust

Andrew Brown
Editor, The Sunday Telegraph

There is a growing mistrust of the Church in this country, and it is not only the laity who are beginning to feel that the clergy are not always to be trusted. The clergy themselves are beginning to feel that the laity are not always to be trusted. This is a dangerous situation, and it is one which the Church must face if it is to survive in the future.

The Bishop of London, Dr. George Bell, has said that the Church is "in a state of crisis". He has also said that the Church is "in a state of confusion". These are not the words of a man who is not serious about the future of the Church. He is a man who has spent his whole life in the service of the Church, and he is a man who is deeply concerned about the future of the Church.

What is the cause of this crisis? It is the growing mistrust of the Church by the laity. This mistrust is based on a number of factors. One factor is the growing awareness of the fact that the Church is not always to be trusted. Another factor is the growing awareness of the fact that the Church is not always to be trusted. This is a dangerous situation, and it is one which the Church must face if it is to survive in the future.

After all, a priest has fathered a child by a woman in some ways he is equally responsible and that means he has fathered the child and cannot shirk his responsibility to support the child and the mother.

The Bishop held out the possibility of church funds being used to support the children of priests who stay in the ministry. An spokesman for the Bishops' Conference said yesterday: "Cases of this kind have always arisen in the life of the Church, but their frequency should not be exaggerated."

Pubs could dry in p

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

Beer supplies to one of Britain's biggest pub chains face severe disruption after delivery workers voted to take industrial action over pay cuts of up to 25 per cent.

The Bass group, the company at the centre of the dispute, owns some 4,000 pubs nationwide and delivers Grolsch, Carling Black Label, draught Bass, Cairns, Tennents and Lamot Pils to a total of between 25,000 and 30,000 outlets.

Leaders of the 1,400 distribution workers voted by a 72 per cent majority to strike and by 85 per cent in favour of industrial action short of stoppages. An overtime ban and work to rule will begin next Friday, followed by 48-hour walk-outs on 23 and 24 January and 6 and 7 February.

Tradesteam, the company that distributes Bass products, will seek an injunction early next week alleging the disagreement does not constitute a lawful trade dispute. The distribution company, 49 per cent owned by

the author?

warrior princess

Gruffudd ap Cynan, King of Wales, was under attack by the Owain Gwynedd, took over the valleys around Gwynedd. Here she raised her four sons and Rhyf. On New Year's Day on the Norman and her husband, I was away, the Norman-backed Gwynedd led the defence. She marched like the Queen of Sheba, leading her army. The name of the author of the book is to be a princess in a name compared to her.

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into fatal delay

The Catholic Church has opened contacts with support groups for priests' mistresses. The Bishop of Portsmouth, the Right Rev Christopher Budd, has been asked formally by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales to talk to the groups, and last week visited one of them.

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Ulster's law of the jungle puts big cats in firing line

David McKittrick
Ireland Correspondent

A rescue operation has been launched in an attempt to save animals whose lives have been placed at risk by the threatened closure of a safari park in Northern Ireland.

The park, which houses lions, tigers, chimpanzees and other animals, is struggling financially following a disastrous summer when takings were drastically reduced by the breakdown of the IRA ceasefire and the Drumcree marching season stand-off.

It is said that closure would mean most of the animals would have to be put down, since the lions are territorial and there is little demand from

other parks and zoos for the animals.

The Causeway safari park is in north Antrim, close to the Giant's Causeway and in one of Northern Ireland's more popular tourist areas. The number of visitors to the area from the Irish Republic and elsewhere increased markedly following the 1994 IRA ceasefire.

The park employs three full-time staff together with around 40 workers during the summer season. Its future was placed in question earlier this week with a Customs and Excise High Court action for the non-payment of VAT. The Official Receiver is now involved.

The park's director Jim Garvin said: "The animals



Endangered species: Lions and other animals at the Causeway Safari Park are facing an uncertain future following the breakdown of the IRA ceasefire. Photographs: Paul McErlane

cannot be moved from the park if it closes. Lions are territorial and most of the other animals have been born and raised in the park. Their natural hunting instincts have therefore gone.

"We are hoping it will not have to close if some rescue package can be obtained. In the meantime the receivers have assured us that the animals will be looked after. For the past

three months we have been feeding the animals out of our own pockets. Our priorities are to protect them and the considerable seasonal employment which the park provides."

His wife Coral added: "The lions are all in families, they're all in prides and groups, and you couldn't split them up."

Davy Leggen, who has been a keeper at the park for 26 years, said: "The park is my livelihood but more importantly it is a hobby. The animals are like children to me, and if they had to be put down it would be like losing a relation."

The local council and a number of other organisations, together with the North Antrim MP, the Rev Ian Paisley, are now involved in discussions on ways of saving the park.

Church in talks with priests' mistresses

Andrew Brown
Religious Affairs Correspondent

The Catholic Church has opened contacts with support groups for priests' mistresses.

The Bishop of Portsmouth, the Right Rev Christopher Budd, has been asked formally by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales to talk to the groups, and last week visited one of them.

The Bishop's negotiations mark a considerable shift in the attitude of the English Catholic church towards openness, and widens the gulf between the English and the Scottish hierarchies who it comes to dealing with failures of celibacy.

Bishop Budd told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme: "Where you have relationships which are clandestine and somebody is still in priestly ministry, the truth must come out and the priest concerned must actually accept that truth and move out of ministry and do what he can to support either the woman or woman and children."

"After all, if a priest has fathered a child by a woman in some ways he is personally responsible and that means he may have to leave ministry and earn sufficient to support the child and the mother."

The Bishop held out the possibility of church funds being used to support the children of priests who stay in the ministry. A spokesman for the Bishops' Conference said yesterday: "Cases of this kind have always arisen in the life of the Church, but their frequency should not be exaggerated."

"Most, though unfortunately not all, have been and are responsibly and discreetly handled, having regard to the best interests of those involved, especially any children."

The admission that "not all" such relationships had been handled in the best interests of the women and children involved drew an extravagant laugh from one of the women who has met Bishop Budd, and who is herself the mother of two small children by a priest.

The woman, who did not wish to be named, said: "A lot of the damage is clearly already done. A lot of guys have continued in ministries knowing that they have responsibilities: whether a woman who has had an abortion, or the child has been adopted. There is a double-standard being adopted: he is ministering and saying the Mass, yet leading a secret life. This has to be bad for the church."

It appears that the policy for dealing with these cases varies from diocese to diocese. Catholic bishops have a considerable degree of administrative independence.

A member of the Sunflower group, one of those to which Bishop Budd has been talking, said: "In some dioceses, the priest may be encouraged to go into a rehabilitation as if he was some kind of drug addict. Many priests would be offered the chance of going abroad - the relationship with the woman remains secret, even though she could be in the Church, and even in orders herself. But the first responsibility should be to the woman."

Pubs could run dry in pay row

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

Beer supplies to one of Britain's highest pub chains face severe disruption after delivery workers voted to take industrial action over pay cuts of up to 25 per cent.

The Bass group, the company at the centre of the dispute, owns some 4,000 pubs nationwide and delivers Grolsch, Carling Black Label, draught Bass, Caffreys, Tennents and Lamot Pils to a total of between 25,000 and 30,000 outlets.

Leaders of the 1,400 distribution workers voted by a 72 per cent majority to strike and by 85 per cent in favour of industrial action short of stoppages. An overtime ban and work to rule will begin next Friday, followed by 48-hour walk-outs on 23 and 24 January and 6 and 7 February.

Tradetech, the company that distributes Bass products, will seek an injunction early next week alleging the disagreement does not constitute a lawful trade dispute. The distribution company, 49 per cent owned by

Bass and 51 per cent by the National Freight Corporation is confident that the court will ban the action.

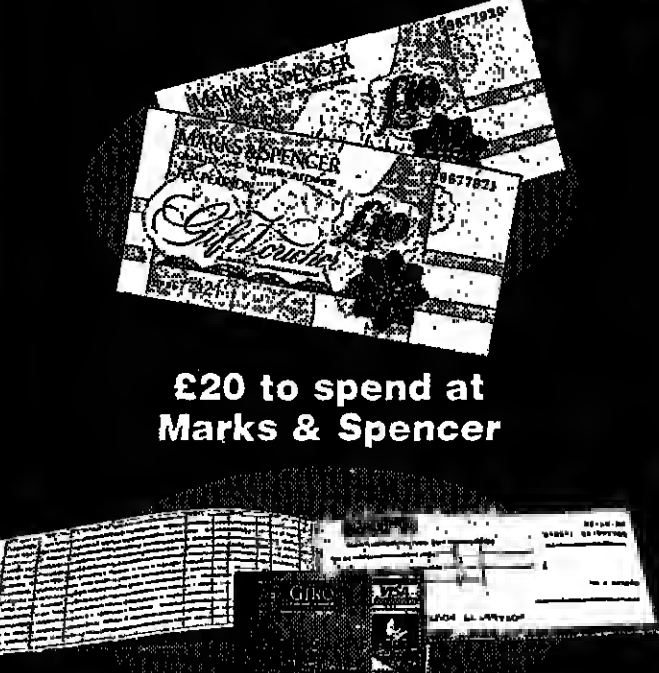
Although terms and conditions have always been negotiated locally at more than 50 depots, the Transport and General Workers' Union is calling for action in support of central bargaining to prevent "attacks" on their terms and conditions. Employees at one depot in the North-east, the only one where draymen belong to the GMB general union, will be dismissed on Monday if they refuse to sign contracts reducing their wages.

Brian Revell, a T&G national official, said Bass was profitable and had no need to adopt such a policy. He said the company had already cut wages by £100 a week at one depot - a drop of around 25 per cent - and was attempting to impose a similar pay level elsewhere.

A Tradetech spokesman said it was competing with other distribution companies and that even after the wage cut, its employees would be among the top 25 per cent earners in the sector.

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news

Medical bills for Gulf war veterans

Ian Burrell

Sick Gulf veterans are being asked to pay army doctors for details of their own medical records.

They have also been told that their GPs cannot be given details of the drugs and injections they were given because the information is "classified".

Other veterans have been refused reimbursement of rail fares to army hospitals for treatment.

Dr David Clark, the shadow defence spokesman, said the "outrageous" treatment contradicted claims by Nicholas Soames, the defence minister, in Parliament that the sick veterans were now being looked after.

"I think the charging is outrageous. If the minister is saying he is going to play ball and be open with the veterans, he cannot then charge them for their own medical records."

"It is a further example of the Government's half-hearted attempt to address this problem. I still remain to be convinced that they are serious about it," he said.

Dr Clark said he would be raising the matter in Parliament. One sick veteran, Warrant Officer Ray Bristow, 38, said he had received no treatment other than counselling which he had arranged himself.

He was medically discharged from the Territorial Army after returning from the Gulf and developing symptoms, which include memory loss, lethargy, hot sweats and insomnia.

Mr Bristow, who served as an army medic, said neither he nor his GP knew what drugs he had been given in the Gulf.

In a letter seen by *The Independent*, army doctors have asked him to pay a £10 fee plus 10p for each of the 37 pages of his medical record.

Veterans are told to make

their cheques payable to the Ministry of Defence's "Imprest Account" at the Royal Defence Medical College.

Although Mr Bristow has paid the money he does not expect to find out what drugs he was given.

In his letter, Brigadier BC McDermott, of the Army Medical Directorate, said: "The drugs given during and before the Gulf War are classified. I do not have the authority to obtain this information, let alone pass it on to the patient." He adds: "This likewise applies to any injections and immunisation that you may have received at that time."

Although the MoD has made assurances to the Commons defence select committee that such information is not classified, Mr Bristow is still none the wiser.

He said: "They asked for volunteers in the Gulf and I had a moral obligation to go because I had the training. I served with pride and dignity and feel terribly let down."

Richie Turnbull, a Chester-based veteran, has been refused reimbursement of his rail fares for treatment of his chronic condition at the Royal Brompton Hospital, in London. Mr Turnbull, 45, has emphysema and chronic asthma and has been told by MoD doctors that his life expectancy is "seriously reduced".

He has had to take nine different forms of medication a day since returning from the Gulf, where he served with the RAF's nuclear, biological and chemical warfare defence unit.

His hospital trips cost £130 because his condition is so serious he must be accompanied. Mr Turnbull, a father of three, said he could not afford to pay the fare on a war pension of £70 a week.

He said: "I feel like I have been told to go away and die."



Putting Hollywood in the shade: the Winter Garden cinema will show the latest film by Lord Attenborough, seen below with Lady Attenborough



Dickie and Lady A invite you to a premiere – book a ferry

A small Scottish cinema will upstage Hollywood with a gala premiere this evening for the latest of Lord Attenborough's films.

In *Love and War*, starring Sandra Bullock and Chris O'Donnell, two of Hollywood's hottest properties, is to have a special screening on the island of Bute before its official premiere in London on 12 February.

Both Lord and Lady Attenborough, who have a home on the Scottish island, will attend the showing at the 97-seat Rothesay's Winter Garden cinema.

The premiere was arranged to raise funds for the island's Winter Garden Trust – set up to maintain and refurbish the historic Winter Garden – of which the filmmaker is patron.

The £25-per-head event will consist of two screenings of the film on either side of a gala dinner hosted by the Attenboroughs, at which Lord Attenborough will discuss the film and his career.

The film is the story of the clandestine romance between Ernest Hemingway when he was a young Red Cross stretcher bearer in northern Italy during the First World War and 26-year-old Agnes von Kurowsky, who nursed him back to health after a battlefield injury.

The film will be on general release in March.

Pinter's fears on bugging rejected

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

Chief police officers and senior Labour politicians have rejected criticism of the Government-sponsored Police Bill by playwright Harold Pinter and leading solicitors.

Mr Pinter protested that the Bill had had "no discernible opposition" from Labour, although it would legalise bugging of private property by the police.

Labour's support for the Bill, promoted by the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, was also criticised yesterday by solicitors' leaders in London because it could allow bugging of their offices to allow the police to eavesdrop on their clients.

There had been "hardly a whimper from Her Majesty's Opposition lest they be thought to be soft on crime," said Robert Roscoe, president, and other leading members of the London Criminal Courts Solicitors' Association. "Until the general election we are in a very dangerous state of constitutional limbo, where the rights of the citizen are being sacrificed by both parties on the altar of political expediency," they said.

However Alun Michael, Labour's home affairs spokesman, yesterday stood by the Bill and denied that the party was not opposing it to avoid appearing soft on crime. He accused the opponents of getting the wrong end of the stick about the legislation.

"Most of the comment about the Bill has been based on a false premise," Mr Michael said. "This activity has been going on for the authorisation of a chief constable and the guidelines from the Home Office for many years. The first guidelines were issued in 1977 and published in 1982. We think it is a step forward to have this activity put on a statutory basis for the first time," he added.

The Association of Chief Police Officers (Acpo) joined with Labour in demanding the measure to put bugging on a statutory footing.

Labour may seek safeguards for solicitors, but Acpo believes exemptions could provide a loophole for criminals to operate from solicitors' offices.

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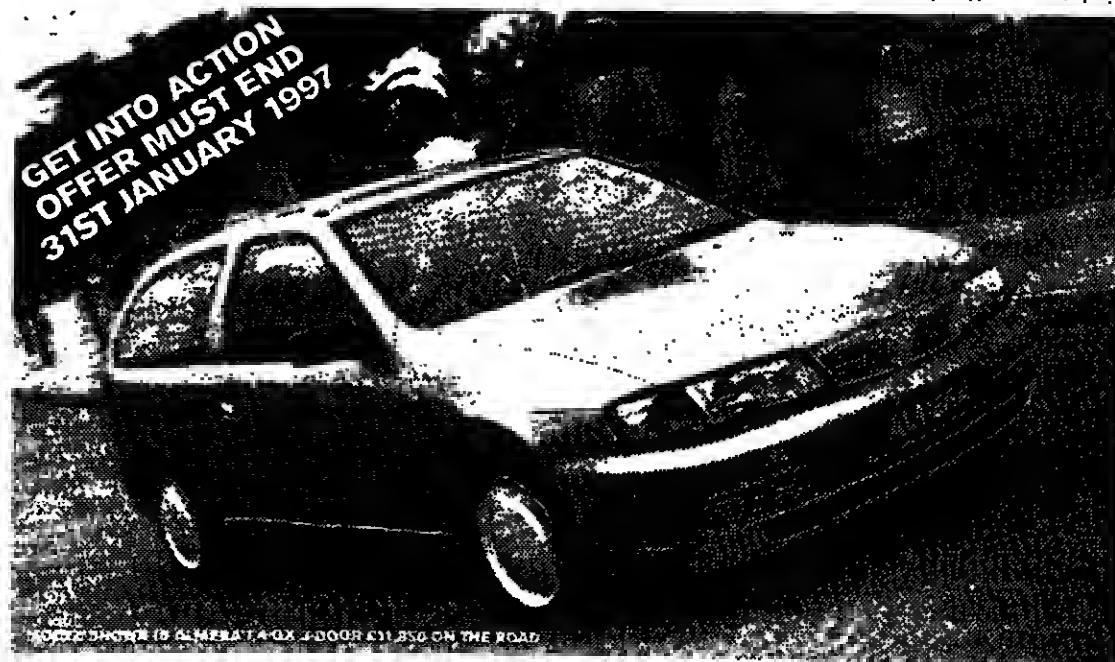
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صكتان الامل

Turkey hints at strike on Cypriot missiles

Alarm over the escalating crisis has spurred on mediation efforts, writes Tony Barber

The international crisis over Cyprus deepened yesterday as Turkey and its Turkish Cypriot clients piled more pressure on the Greek Cypriots not to deploy new Russian missiles in their sector of the island. "If they are deployed, we will do what is needed, and if that means they need to be hit, they will be hit," Turkey's Foreign Minister, Tansu Ciller, said in Ankara.

Blaming the Greek government for the crisis, she added: "Greece is the country which undoubtedly bears most responsibility for this aggressive policy."

The tough language made little impact either on Greece or on the Greek Cypriot-led government of Cyprus, which is adamant that it will go ahead with plans to buy the S-300 surface-to-air missile system. However, diplomats said there was still scope for a negotiated solution to the problem, as it could take many months for the missiles to arrive from Russia.

pre-emptive military strike would be unacceptable.

If the missiles are installed, their 90-mile range would enable the Greek Cypriots to attack Turkish aircraft in Turkey's airspace, as well as that of Cyprus. The Turks are hinting at various military counter-measures, ranging from the destruction of the missile launch pads to a blockade of Cyprus.

In a statement distributed by the Turkish foreign ministry yesterday, the Turkish Cypriot leader, Raul Denktash, mentioned another option when he threatened to take over Varosha, a disputed area that has been sealed off since Turkey's 1974 invasion of Cyprus. Most property in Varosha, which lies just south of the Turkish-held resort of Famagusta, is owned by Greek Cypriots.

The confrontation over the missiles has erupted at the start of a year that was supposed to see the launch of a concerted international effort to settle the Cyprus dispute. The US, Britain, other European Union countries and the United Nations were all hoping to see direct talks this spring between Mr Denktash and the Greek Cypriot leader, President Glafcos Clerides.

The prospects for such talks have not completely collapsed, but it is hard to see how face-to-face negotiations could start

as long as the missile crisis remains unresolved. Mr Clerides has not met Mr Denktash since 1994 and says there is no point in arranging another meeting unless his rival is prepared to make substantive compromises.

Even before the missiles crisis, the political and military climate on Cyprus did not appear to favour a diplomatic breakthrough. In the worst violence since 1974, five people – four Greek Cypriots and one Turkish Cypriot – were killed last year in clashes along the UN buffer zone dividing the two sectors.

The missiles deal with Russia represents the Cyprus government's first serious attempt at building a credible air defence system after 22 years of Turkish superiority in the air. The government has not disclosed how many missiles it is buying, but they are part of a steady defence build-up that has been closely co-ordinated with Greece.



Flashpoint: The buffer zone in Cyprus watched over by the UN, which has pressed Greece and Turkey to conduct direct talks. Photograph: Graham Trott/Katz

Are homeless people worth just 2 minutes of your time?

THE NUMBER of homeless families in the UK has almost doubled in the last fifteen years. Shelter believes much more decisive action is needed.

When you look at the figures, providing decent housing for homeless people makes economic sense. The savings on social services and extra health care costs alone would make it economically worthwhile. And what price do you put on ruined lives? The children, for instance, who may never know a real home...



It's not about politics, it's about getting homeless people decent homes, and off the streets. But to get this message across we need to know what you feel about homelessness.

Please spend just two minutes of your time completing this survey, and return it as soon as you can. If you can also make a donation of £15 (or whatever you can afford) we would be very grateful. We want to publish the results as soon as possible, so please don't delay.

URGENT:
Please reply
by JAN 22
1997

Shelter National Opinion Survey on Homelessness

Please help us make this the widest ever survey of attitudes to homelessness. Your contribution will be much appreciated, and your answers treated in the strictest confidence. Please complete and return by January 22nd 1997.

Q1. Are you aged:
18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐
45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65-74 ☐ 75+ ☐

Q2. Do you:
own your own home or have a mortgage? ☐
rent privately? ☐
rent from a Housing Association or local authority? ☐
live in someone else's home? ☐
other ☐

Q3. Do you share your home with:
children? Yes ☐ No ☐
partner/husband/wife or anyone else related to you? Yes ☐ No ☐
Someone not related to you? Yes ☐ No ☐

Q4. Have you ever been homeless or at serious risk of losing your home yourself (through a tenancy ending, not being able to afford the rent or mortgage, break up of relationship, or other reason)?
Yes ☐ No ☐

Q5. Do you know anyone else who is either homeless or at serious risk of losing their home in such a way?
At risk of homelessness Yes ☐ No ☐
Actually homeless Yes ☐ No ☐

Q6. Bad housing can have serious long-term consequences. Please show how important you view these problems as being (tick one box only for each problem; 1 being the most important):
Children doing badly at school 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐
People suffering asthma, bronchitis and other serious diseases ☐ ☐ ☐
People becoming more dependent on social services ☐ ☐ ☐

Q7. Do you agree or disagree that homelessness has a bad effect on the following?
The families and individuals concerned Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Don't know ☐
Local communities Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Don't know ☐
Society as a whole Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Don't know ☐
The economy Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Don't know ☐

Q8. Do you think politicians are at present sufficiently concerned about the plight of homeless people?
Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐

Q9. Would you be willing to write a letter to an MP which might help to get homeless people housed?
Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐

Q10. Would you be willing to make a donation to Shelter to help homeless people?
Yes ☐ No ☐

Name: (BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)

Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone No:

Thank you for your time. If you would like to make a donation, please return your cheque, made out to 'Shelter', with this survey. We suggest £15, but any amount you can give will be greatly appreciated.

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96506

Bomb blasts deal severe blow to Hebron talks

Patrick Cockburn
Jerusalem

In the aftermath of two bomb explosions in Tel Aviv overnight Israel and the Palestinian leadership tried yesterday to reduce the political impact of the attack – the first since March – on the already faltering talks about the Israeli redeployment of its troops on the West Bank.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, promised "to wage war against the terrorists" and said that, if they were found to have come from areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority, then it would not be "business as usual".

Freih Abu Medeen, the Palestinian Minister of Justice, said: "I don't think Palestinians were behind these explosions because such attacks serve only Netanyahu."

Despite Mr Netanyahu's harsh words he has continued talks with Dennis Ross, the United States peace envoy. But the effect of two pipe bombs, each containing half a kilo of an explosive mix of lemon, nitric acid and acetone, which seriously injured nobody when they blew up in a south Tel Aviv red light district, shows how little it takes to plunge relations between Israel and the Palestinians into renewed crisis.

Nobody has yet claimed responsibility for the bombs, which police at first thought might be the result of a criminal feud, but the most likely Palestinian faction to be behind them is the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Based in Damascus, the group has carried out sporadic killings of Israeli settlers over the last year.

Israeli police sealed off Jerusalem from the West Bank yesterday as 80,000 Palestinians prayed in and around al-Aqsa mosque on the first day of the Ramadan fast. Traffic in the city came to a halt because of security measures and Palestinian worshippers had to leave their identity cards in boxes before they entered the mosque.

In his sermon, broadcast live to Muslims around the world, Sheikh Hamed Beitawi, a leading figure in Hamas, the Islamic militant group, sharply attacked Israel, saying: "Israel is heading the drums of war and aggression against Muslims and Islam."

In the Palestinian town of Nablus yesterday Hamas held a memorial rally for Yahyah Ayyash, the Palestinian bomb maker who was blown up by a booby-trapped mobile phone in Gaza on 5 January last year. It was in revenge for his assassination that Hamas and Islamic Jihad carried out four suicide bomb attacks in February and March last year which killed 63 people and led to the victory of Mr Netanyahu and his right-wing government in the election in May.

Hamas is unlikely to have carried out this week's bomb attack in Tel Aviv because its local leadership is reported to have promised Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, that it has suspended its bombing campaign. Mahmoud Zahar, a Hamas spokesman, said last week that his organisation would not retaliate after the shooting of seven Palestinians in Hebron by an Israeli settler because so many of its members were in prison and the movement had been "disarmed" by the Palestinian Authority.

Negotiations between Mr Arafat and Israel remain deadlocked over the time scale for further Israeli withdrawals under the Oslo accords. The Palestinians want Israel to pull out of all Palestinian villages by September this year, while Mr Netanyahu wants to delay the withdrawal for two years. Mr Arafat has rejected a US compromise proposal that Israeli troops leave in mid-1998. Terms for Israel's partial withdrawal from Hebron are no longer in real dispute.

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Pinter
fears of
bugging
rejected

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

Chief police officers and Labour politicians have rejected criticism of the Government's proposed Police Proliferation Bill.

Mr Pinter, who has been the Government's main spokesman on the bill, said: "The bill is not about bugging."

He said the bill was designed to ensure that the police have the necessary powers to investigate serious crime.

The bill would give the police the power to intercept communications between people who are suspected of committing serious crimes.

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international

The ortolan stirs up trouble behind a white napkin

John Lichfield
Paris

This is the story of a small bird, the last supper of a dying president – and the increasingly bizarre pronouncements of a remote and unpopular prime minister.

It concerns, above all, a rare sub-species of bunting, called the ortolan, which has the misfortune to taste, if fattened and cooked in the right way, like a mixture of truffles and pâté de foie gras.

Ortolans are, by Gascon tradition, eaten whole and still aflame – beaks, wings, feathers, legs, innards and all. Served in this

ritual manner, they are part delicacy, part macho and, recently, an act of southern regional defiance of interfering Paris bureaucrats and Brussels Eurocrats.

Since 1987, by European Union directive and reluctant French decree, the hunting, selling and eating of ortolans has been a contravention (fifth class) of the French Rural Code, punishable (technically) by a stiff fine. The chief effect of the decree has been enormously to increase the price of ortolans, which can now fetch up to £35 each on the black market.

This fact was remarked upon recently by Alain Juppé, a Gascon by birth, Mayor of

Bordeaux, and the least popular Prime Minister of France since records began. In an interview with *Elle* magazine, given as part of a campaign to seem less aloof and egg-headed, he said: "What is amusing about ortolans is that it is forbidden to hunt and sell them but you can still find them in all the best places."

Mr Juppé, presumably attempting to sound like a man of the soil, managed to sound like an elitist snob who did not let the law interfere with his pleasures. Animal welfare groups were furious. Brigitte Bardot, self-appointed defender of French wildlife, was indignant. The League for the

Protection of Birds protested to the European Commission.

A few days later, extracts were published from a new book on the final months of President François Mitterrand, also a son of the gastronomically inventive south-west. The author, Georges-Marc Benamou, revealed that at a New Year's Eve supper in the region Mitterrand consumed, *inter alia*, 30 oysters and two ortolans.

After grabbing the last of 12 birds, the dying president disappeared for a second time behind the large, white napkin, which is ritually placed over the head of anyone about to indulge in the horrific act of eat-

ing a charred, but entire ortolan. "Those who had already been through the ordeal once, looked at each other in astonishment," wrote Mr Benamou. The table listened in embarrassment as the former president masticated the little bird to a paste behind the napkin, in the approved manner, before swallowing it. Then Mitterrand lay back in his chair, his face beaming in "ecstasy". Eight days later he died.

These revelations have unleashed a flurry of ortolan stories in the French press. Only the bird protection league remains unamused. Alain Bougrain-Dubourg, the league's president, claimed that up to

150,000 ortolans a year were captured and eaten during their migration through France. Mr Bougrain-Dubourg said the government had not yet made the capture of ortolans unequivocally illegal. The hunting lobby has contorted that ortolans had been hunted since Roman times; that no more than 40,000 were taken each year; and this amounted to less than 2 per cent of the European population.

A cartoon in the satirical newspaper *Le Canard Enchaîné* gave Mitterrand the posthumous last word on the controversy. "So what's the fuss?" says a ghostly, but portly, outline of the Socialist President. "There can also be leftist ortolans."

Milosevic relies on grey market to keep afloat

Andrew Gumbel
Belgrade

Apart from the street demonstrations, the pressure of the international community, the growing divisions among his own supporters and the general embarrassment at being caught cheating at the ballot box, there is another reason why President Slobodan Milosevic needs to resolve the political crisis racking Serbia as quickly as possible: the country is running out of money.

The economy has lurched from disaster to disaster since the beginning of the Balkan wars in 1991, weathering hyperinflation, international isolation and the establishment of a system which has concentrated wealth in the hands of the chosen few while leaving more than half the country on or below the poverty line.

For a long time the Serbian people seemed remarkably resilient to such hardships, but the new wave of anti-government feeling has made them far less tolerant. In the past few weeks, the government has dug deep into its pockets to catch up with pensions arrears, cut electricity prices and keep the riot police happy. These things require hard currency, and hard currency is one thing the Serbian

leadership does not have – at least not officially.

The country's trade deficit for 1996 is estimated at \$2.2bn (£1.3bn), while official reserves deposited at the Yugoslav National Bank are no more than \$300m. Nobody knows exactly how the country is making up the shortfall, but it is almost certainly via the semi-legal or illegal web of financial transactions, offshore banking arrangements and secret funding the government has built up over the past few years.

"It is impossible that the trade deficit is being financed by legal sources," says Mladjan Dinkic, an economics professor at Belgrade University and author of a critique of the Milosevic system, entitled *The Economics of Destruction*. One way the government manages to raise funds, he believes, is by squeezing it out of the people.

In the past few days, the Yugoslav dinar has yo-yoed dramatically in street trade, wavering from 3.8 to the German mark up to five and then down again to 4.2 – a sure sign, according to Professor Dinkic, of government manipulation.

In effect, the state-controlled commercial banks deny cash to their customers, forcing them to sell hard currency from their savings to street traders, who are

also controlled by the state. The more they sell, the weaker the dinar becomes. Then, after a few days, the banks loosen their credit squeeze and the dinar strengthens. The dealers sell the hard currency they have bought and make a tidy profit, which they pass on to the government.

The process is illegal. Professor Dinkic says, because it is an issue of new money that entirely bypasses the central bank and requires an increase in the banks' debt exposure well beyond the established limit. But the government has used the tactic several times in the past two years, at the risk of reigniting the hyperinflation that raged through Serbia in 1992-93.

By now, such "grey issues" of new money are not enough to keep the ship afloat. Other covert sources of hard currency probably include profits from the black market in cigarettes, and company profits ploughed into Yugoslav-controlled offshore banks run by confidants of Mr Milosevic.

If Mr Milosevic stays in power and fails to change his policies radically, his resources are likely to dwindle fast. He can try to unfreeze Serbia and Montenegro's share of former Yugoslavia's assets held in Basel. But time is against him – exactly how much time, nobody knows.



Symmetry in white: An employee shovelling snow from the steps leading to the Belvedere pavilion of the Saxonian state vineyards at Wackerbarth Castle in Radebeul, near Dresden yesterday after a fresh snowfall covered the terraced gardens of the baroque compound. Photograph: AFP

Protesters storm Bulgarian assembly

Adrian Bridge

Dozens of anti-government protesters broke into the building housing Bulgaria's parliament yesterday during a protest to demand early parliamentary elections. Police tried to block the protesters' way with tables inside the building, and used tear gas to try to disperse hundreds of opposition supporters

who had surrounded the parliament in a human chain.

Their protest came after the ruling Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) refused to vote on a "salvation declaration" proposed by the opposition Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) that called for an early national poll.

But parliament began an extraordinary session to discuss the opposition's declaration and

voting started on the proposal. The opposition says the BSP has failed to tackle the country's economic crisis and lacks support to form a government.

While demonstrators in Serbia have now taken to the streets for more than 50 days in succession, their counterparts in Bulgaria only began their protests last week, drawing ever increasing numbers each day.

UDF leaders, in part inspired by events in Belgrade, hope their protests will gather a similar momentum and are trying to draw on similarities in the demonstrators' cause. "We protest against one and the same discredited Communist regime," said UDF leader, Ivan Kostov. Although both Bulgaria and Serbia are ruled by ex-Communist Socialist parties, there

are important differences in their protests. Whereas the Serbian demonstrators seek a reversal of the government's cancellation of opposition local election victories, the Bulgarians are trying to oust a government which, while unpopular, was legitimately elected to power in December 1994 – and which still has two years of its mandate to run.

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IN BRIEF

• Northern Rock, the building society, is planning to launch a new mortgage product in the autumn. The new product will be a 15-year fixed-rate mortgage, based on the Bank of England's base rate. It will add to the 15-year fixed-rate mortgage which the society has already launched. The new product will be available to customers who have a Northern Rock Regency Card. The society is also planning to launch a new product, the Northern Rock Regency Card, which will be available to customers who have a Northern Rock Regency Card.

• The Spanish government yesterday announced that it is planning to launch a new product, the Spanish government's new product, which will be available to customers who have a Spanish government's new product. The new product will be available to customers who have a Spanish government's new product.

• At least two South Korean companies, Airbus Industrie and Boeing, are planning to launch a new product, the South Korean companies' new product, which will be available to customers who have a South Korean companies' new product.

• Volkswagen's "defeat" at the hands of the German government, which is planning to launch a new product, the Volkswagen's new product, which will be available to customers who have a Volkswagen's new product.

• David Morris, chairman of Northern Rock, is planning to launch a new product, the Northern Rock's new product, which will be available to customers who have a Northern Rock's new product.

• Grundig has appointed Credit Lyonnais as its new partner and investors for the company's new product, the Grundig's new product, which will be available to customers who have a Grundig's new product.

• The Midlands-based engineering company also said it would seek to raise up to 10 per cent of the company's share capital through a public offering of shares. The company is planning to launch a new product, the Midlands-based engineering company's new product, which will be available to customers who have a Midlands-based engineering company's new product.

صلى الله عليه وسلم

international

In the temples of Hollywood, they like to look after the stars of Scientology

A constellation of Hollywood stars and leading producers and directors sign a joint letter defending a religious group which has frequently been derided as a cult and pinning accusations of Nazism on modern Germany and the reaction in America is, shall we say, muted. It barely registers, in fact.

That the absence of surprise and debate in the United States – is almost more remarkable than the act itself. Is the American media intimidated by this group's fearsome reputation for taking out lawsuits or is what happened here simply not considered especially unusual?

We are talking, of course, about the full-page advertisement placed this week in the *International Herald Tribune* lambasting the German government for its intolerance of the Church of Scientology. Signed by such figures as Dustin

The sect of the 'Thetans' has acquired a kind of respectability in the US, says **David Osborne**

Hoffman, Goldie Hawn, Mario Puzo and Aaron Spelling, it explicitly evoked the Nazi atrocities against the Jews six decades ago and the Holocaust.

The letter's author was Bertram Fields, a well-known lawyer to the stars. A Jew, he is not a Scientologist and nor are the 33 other signatories. He has explained that he was acting on a conviction that Scientologists were a persecuted minority in Germany who needed protection.

"I decided that if I was going to stand by my principles, I had to do something about this," he said. "I sent a detailed letter to a number of my friends, in addition to a copy of this letter, and asked if they would sign it."

Surprisingly, most of the people I sent it to agreed."

Scientology would seem like a risky cause for public figures to become associated with. Founded by the American science fiction writer, L Ron Hubbard (LRH to church members) in the Fifties, the church has suffered always from the perception of outsiders that it is both barmy in its beliefs and manipulative and dangerous in its recruiting and use of members' money.

The doctrine was laid out in Hubbard's 1950 book, *Dianetics*. The church promises those who join that it will "clear" their spirits through "auditing". Hubbard taught his followers that they were vessels for immortal

souls called Thetans. The enemy of Thetans are Engrams, which can be purged by auditing. An device called the E-meter measures your Engram level.

Scientologists have come under public assault in several countries other than Germany, notably in France, Canada and the US. The sect's standing in America in recent years, however, has recovered somewhat. In part this is because of its successful programmes for instance on drug abuse and graffiti.

It is in Hollywood itself, however, that the church has undoubtedly scored highest. In the studios of La-La Land, Scientology has become almost trendy. It does not hurt, of course, that among its disciples

are the likes of Tom Cruise, his wife, Nicole Kidman and the other star *du jour*, John Travolta. Others said either to support the church or to be full members of it are Demi Moore, Priscilla Presley, Kirstie Alley and Shirley MacLaine.

Some Germans boycotted Tom Cruise's last blockbuster, *Mission: Impossible*, because of his beliefs. Mr Cruise is a mighty property, however, whom everyone in the industry needs to be seen to be supporting. And there is Mr Travolta. He has publicly attributed his return to success to his membership of the Church of Scientology.

Helmut Kohl may fulminate and sensible thinkers in Europe may be aghast. The friends of Mr Fields – or friends, rather, of Mr Cruise and Mr Travolta – are not likely to be harbouring regrets.



Disciples: Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman are among Hollywood's leading Scientologists

Angry Germany points to the past

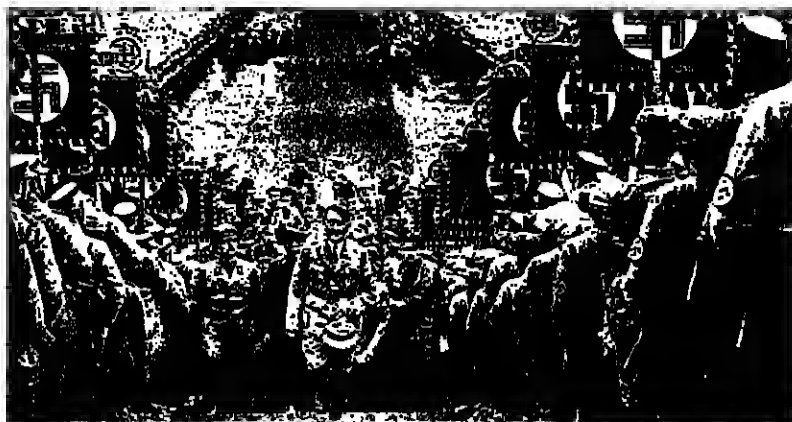
Inare Karacs
Born

Germans of all political persuasions and religious beliefs united yesterday to rebuke the star that their country was conducting a Nazi-style persecution of Scientologists.

"It is disgraceful and irresponsible to draw such historical parallels which are completely out of touch with reality," said Michel Friedman, a board member of the Central Council of Jews in Germany. "It's totally off the mark. Today we have a democracy and a state based on the rule of law. Then it was a dictatorship."

The "open letter" from 34 leading American entertainers, published as an advertisement in the *International Herald Tribune*, drew fire from opposition and government alike. Klaus Kinkel, the Foreign Minister, accused Scientologists of "distorting history".

Rudolf Scharping, the leader of the largest opposition group, the Social Democrats, said: "This letter is not acceptable, especially because of the scandalous comparison of today's



True evil: Germans are outraged at the comparison made with the Nazis

Germany with Hitler's fascist rule."

The commentators agreed that the letter, addressed to Chancellor Helmut Kohl, was in exceptionally bad taste. "They picked the highest address in Bonn and the lowest point in German history," wrote the daily *Die Welt*. "The result is the nastiest public

attack against the Federal Republic."

The republic will survive, but the Church of Scientology's days in Germany may be numbered. Edmund Stoiber, the Prime Minister of Bavaria, promised yesterday to "go after this organisation" with renewed vigour. Bavaria has already banned members

of the sect from state jobs and the teaching profession, a measure which the conservative government in Bonn wants to implement nation-wide. Scientologists, believed to number about 30,000 in Germany, are also excluded from all major parties and several trade organisations.

These measures are already the most repressive in Europe, but the government has mooted further restrictions which would effectively drive the sect underground. There are proposals to place the Church of Scientology under observation, to be watched by an office which keeps track of all extremist groups.

This kind of vigilance is indeed a legacy of the Nazi era, but not in the way that the Hollywood stars understand. Under the Federal Republic's constitution, all organisations which aim to subvert democracy are proscribed.

To Germans, the Scientologists' mind-bending techniques and their habit of radiating their propaganda through prominent personalities smacks of Nazism.

Making a mighty avalanche out of a snow flurry

It's that time of year again. When grown men glance nervously and constantly at the heavens, when local newscasters adopt a tone suggesting that a few dozen Russian intercontinental ballistic missiles are at that moment headed towards the capital of the free world, and when the populace strips supermarket shelves bare in an attempt to avoid Armageddon. Washington, in other words, is about to receive its first snow of the winter.

After days of advance publicity, the traumatic event occurred on Thursday, closing schools across the region, allowing federal workers to take the day off, and sweeping all other news aside. Now you might

have thought we'd have learnt to handle this sort of thing. Exactly a year ago, the Blizzard of '96 struck, dumping two feet of snow and paralysing the city for a week. That was a truly amazing event, of which our grandchildren will rightly speak in awe. But despite the best efforts of Mayor Marion Barry, and the virtual absence in the bankrupt District of Columbia of a single functioning snow plough, we survived. This time, however, everyone knew in advance it wouldn't be more than two inches. But why let facts get in the way of a media-generated panic?

What makes the fuss doubly absurd is that unlike its British equivalent, Ameri-

can weather is often genuinely exciting. Here there is no need to ponder the difference lovingly drawn by British weathercasters between "sunshine but some scattered showers", and "showers with a few sunny intervals". Last weekend in DC, T-shirts were the order of the hour as the temperature hit a record 23C. Four days later we were 28 degrees cooler. This is a land of climatic extremes, of hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts, dustbowls, and Biblical floods. Take the last two weeks out West.

Great swathes of California, Nevada, Oregon and Washington state have been designated disaster areas after once-in-a-century flooding which caused \$2bn (£1.1bn) of damage in California alone. They even had to close the casinos in Reno, Nevada. That is serious.

Out on the northern plains a blast of Arctic air has reduced the temperature in Bismarck, North Dakota, to around -22C. With 30mph winds, the wind chill reading is -60C. But DC's weather forecasters don't men-

tion this truly newsworthy freeze, as they hype the petty inconvenience closer to home. Their advice veers from the bossy to the fatuous. Do drive carefully, wear warmer clothes, allow extra time to get to work. But such statements of the obvious pale beside the pearls dispensed by another of their number. If you go out in the car, he counselled, take emergency supplies, including water, biscuits and tinned food. All this in Metro Washington, one of the most affluent and thickly populated areas in the country, where you're never more than 100 yards from a Volvo station wagon.

And the hysteria will doubtless continue. America being America, safety is

sought in gadgetry and statistics. Since last year, DC has installed a computerised monitoring system that tracks pavement temperatures across the city. No less comforting was news that in the Maryland suburbs, 350 workers spread 56,000 tonnes of salt, while their opposite numbers in northern Virginia had spread a combination of salt and liquid calcium chloride on 13,000 lane-miles of highway by 6am. When you're stuck in the usual commuting traffic jam, such numbers have a wonderfully soothing, hypnotic effect. Who knows, they might even help us over a Russian nuclear attack.

Rupert Cornwell

We think it's time you went away

Hotel breaks: 2 nights for the price of 1

The Independent and the Independent on Sunday would like to invite you to take a hotel break and enjoy two nights for the price of one. Simply pay for one night's bed and breakfast and you will get the next night, including breakfast, free. Prices are based on two people sharing a double or twin room.

All the participating hotels are members of the Minotel consortium and many will allow you to enjoy a longer stay on the same basis: pay for two nights and stay for four, for example. You can check this with your chosen hotel when you make your initial reservation.

There are more than 80 Minotel hotels participating in this offer, all of which are located in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. All the hotels offer top-class comfort and pride themselves on providing a personal service that many larger establishments cannot match.

A list of the participating Minotel hotels will be printed in tomorrow's Independent on Sunday and again in Monday's Independent.

How to Qualify
To qualify for your 2 for 1 break, you must collect four differently numbered tokens (including at least one from the Independent on Sunday). We are printing nine tokens in The Independent and the Independent on Sunday from Saturday 11 until Sunday 19 January. Then attach them to one of the vouchers we are printing in The Independent on Tuesday 14

January and Saturday 18 January and in the Independent on Sunday on 19 January (a confirmation booking form will also be published on these dates). When you have four tokens and a voucher, simply follow the booking procedure detailed below. If you would like to take more than one 2 for 1 break, just collect four tokens and one voucher for each separate occasion that you wish to go. Today we print Token 1; Token 2 will be printed in tomorrow's Independent on Sunday.

Booking Procedure
1. All bookings must be made by telephone direct with each individual hotel. Callers must identify themselves as "Independent 2 for 1 voucher holders" as some hotels may have standard or superior rooms available at normal rates when their allocation of 2 for 1 rooms is full.
2. All bookings must be pre-paid and reservations can be confirmed over the telephone by credit card holders at most hotels.
3. Voucher holders wishing to pay by other methods can make a provisional booking by phone which the hotel will keep open for 48 hours pending receipt of the confirmation booking form and payment which will be acknowledged by the hotel on the day it is received. If you do not receive such an acknowledgement within seven days, you are advised to contact the hotel.
4. Vouchers must be surrendered on arrival at the hotel and can be used on one occasion only.
5. Vouchers are valid from 11 January to 30 September 1997.



Pictured today is Chequers Hotel in Pulborough, West Sussex. This country hotel with luxury ensuite rooms, costs from £79 for a double or twin room for one night. This hotel has a highly recommended restaurant, holder of an AA rosette.

Terms and Conditions

1. To participate in our 2 for 1 offer you must collect 4 differently numbered tokens including one from the Independent on Sunday and attach them to a voucher. If you would like to take more than one 2 for 1 break, just collect four tokens and one voucher for each separate occasion that you wish to go.
2. The voucher may be redeemed at any participating Minotel hotel (as listed in the Independent on Sunday, 12 January, and The Independent, 13 January) for one free night's bed and breakfast for two people in a standard twin or double room when the first night's bed and breakfast is pre-purchased at the price indicated.
3. Some hotels, at the proprietor's discretion, will accept the voucher for longer stays on the same basis, so you can stay for 4 nights for the price of 2 for example. Please check with your chosen hotel when making your booking.
4. The voucher does not cover payment for any other meals or service that may be requested by the holder and cannot be used with any other offer, saving or discount that may be available at the hotel.
5. No bookings will be accepted for Bank holiday periods.
6. Bookings for January, February, March and April cannot be made more than 6 weeks in advance. Bookings for May and September cannot be made more than 4 weeks in advance. Bookings for June, July and August cannot be made more than 7 days in advance.
7. Vouchers are valid from 11 January to 30 September 1997.
8. Vouchers must be surrendered on arrival at the hotel and can be used on one occasion only.
9. No-shows or cancellations less than 14 days prior to the anticipated date of arrival at the hotel will render the voucher invalid and the

holder liable for payment in full for each night booked, including those previously offered free.

10. All bookings made under this promotion are subject to availability and to the selected hotel's own period of availability and terms and conditions, except where those conditions may differ from these in which case these conditions shall prevail.

11. Photocopies of tokens and vouchers are not acceptable.
12. One child, under the age of 12 years at the time of booking and sharing a room with two adults will be accommodated free of charge but all meals, including breakfast, will be chargeable.

13. The descriptions and prices contained in this offer have been supplied by participating hotels. While every effort has been made to ensure their accuracy prior to publication, no responsibility can be taken by Newspaper Publishing plc, Charterhouse Promotions or Minotel for any errors, omissions or changes that may take place afterwards without notice.



THE INDEPENDENT

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

صلى الله عليه وسلم

Tired of playing the waiting game

Why are we waiting? It is now an established tradition for an opposition leader to call, twice a week, for an immediate general election. We think Tony Blair's continuation of this ritual is tiresome. But it occurs to us, at the end of the first week of the long election campaign, to ask the Prime Minister why he thinks there should not be a general election now. We doubt that he can give us one good reason. He might claim that he has a five-year mandate, which has not yet expired. But last November's Queen's Speech confirmed that this is a government that has run out of things to do. His real reasons for hanging on are less elevated. Most importantly, perhaps, he is waiting for something to turn up.

The parallels between John Major and Mr Micawber are instructive. The Conservatives purport to believe in Mr Micawber's simple formula for achieving happiness: that income should exceed outgoings – if only by "ought and expense". But, as the national debt has doubled, they are reduced, like Mr Micawber, to hoping for a windfall. The cause of this sorry state is, as both Mr Major and Mr Micawber have said, "circumstances beyond my individual control".

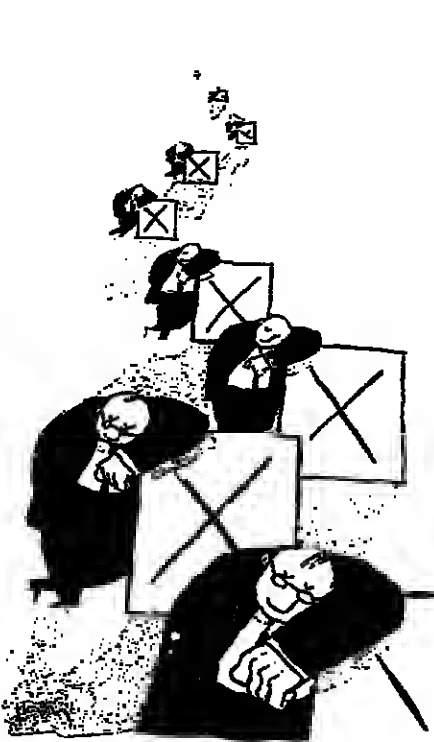
In the end, something did turn up for Mr Micawber, because he is found in the closing pages of *David Copperfield*, relieved of his debts, as a much-esteemed colonial magistrate in Australia. Here the helpfulness of the literary analogy ends. Does this mean Mr Major will be saved by 8 million Halifax customers, grate-

ful that, for them at least, something has turned up – in the form of an average £1,290 hand-out? Or does it mean, perhaps, that Mr Major will end his career as cultural attaché to Tasmania?

It is an intriguing conundrum. Meanwhile, the Tory game plan is to drag it out to the bitter end. If nothing turns up, the hope is that, with the passage of time, more and more people will feel better off. But it is hard to see how Mr Major will get the thanks for the Halifax's bonanza, or any other dividend. All the evidence suggests a radical disconnection between real personal disposable income and government popularity – a link which had been one of the iron laws of British politics. It was broken by a combination of the Tories' breach of trust on taxes and the pound's devaluation out of the ERM in 1992.

The third of Mr Major's calculations is that the longer he plays it, the more the shine comes off Tony Blair's toothy smile and the more difficult it becomes for Labour to travel light into the election. The Labour leader's strategy is already coming under pressure. The fact that the policies on taxing the rich and on electoral reform are not yet firmly nailed to the floor does not inspire confidence that Labour's vessel is ready for the storms of an election campaign.

Mr Major is no doubt fighting the last war, and he remembers that the decisive shift in the 1992 election campaign was the growing expectation that Labour was going to win. Especially in the last week, this focused atten-



tion on Neil Kinnock as a potential prime minister and the policies of his potential government. There is much evidence that weakly attached voters then voted tactically against Labour. Given that most voters already expect a Labour government this time, Lord Saatchi and Brian Mawhinney hope to excite our fears of the unknown in the same way.

The Tory calculations have nothing to do with the national interest, although we welcome the Tory strategy to the extent that it is designed to flush out answers from Mr Blair. But we do not believe in spinning out the process for the sake of it: the eight questions to all parties, which we asked on Tuesday on behalf of the voters, could and should be answered now. Indeed, Mr Major has already answered one, saying he would never take Britain out of the European Union, and Mr Blair gets half a tick for in effect ruling out a 50p top rate of tax.

What's more, there must be serious doubts about whether the Tory strategy will work. If billboard advertising is our equivalent of American television commercials, then the Saatchi and the Tories have trounced Labour in the past, but this week's "New Labour, New Future" campaign, with its red tear motif, seems unlikely to match past successes. There is an emotional artificiality about Dr Mawhinney's campaign which fails to hit home.

That is not to say Labour's response is up to much either, in this first week of what the political operatives call the 17-week "near-

term campaign". Wito remembers its poster, only launched the other day: a picture of Mr Major, asserting that he cannot be trusted on the economy after 23 tax rises?

This is the sort of politics that gets us nowhere and puts people off. People don't want a long election campaign. The waiting is tiresome, and too many important things are on hold. The electorate are quite happy to pay attention for a few days and then do their civic duty, but three weeks is a bit much, let alone four months.

So why not call an election for three weeks' time? Then the new government will have a real chance to prepare for the June summit in Amsterdam, which will set the future course of the EU, and politics can move on from its limbo.

The lesson is that there is a strong case for fixed-term parliaments, something which Neil Kinnock advocated at the last election but on which Labour is – as on so many things – silent now. We accept that a definite election date would not shorten the pre-election razzamazzle, but it would allow more certainty and would take away one unjustified advantage of incumbency – the right of the Prime Minister to decide when the country goes to the polls.

Meanwhile, we should ask Mr Major another question in addition to *The Independent's* Eight: what does he hope to achieve for the country rather than his party in the next four months?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Shepherd's pension changes mean mass exodus of teachers

Sir: It is disingenuous for Gillian Shepherd ("Early teacher retirement is not a right", 9 January) to dress up her proposals on teacher pensions simply as putting "early retirement back on a sensible footing".

The timing of the changes is leading to an employer-encouraged mass exodus of over-50-year-olds who will leave teaching before 1 April 1997, while they are still entitled to a pension. The exodus will play havoc with the education of students and pupils, especially those facing examinations in June and July, and put extra financial pressure on the Teachers' Pension Scheme, when the purpose of the proposed changes is to reduce such pressure. **SEB SCHMOLLER**
Sheffield

Sir: Gillian Shepherd argues that it is her duty to ensure that teachers enjoying good health and secure employment should continue in service until they are 60.

However, the Government's proposals would also deny a pension to teachers over 50 who are made compulsorily redundant. These days this is an increasingly likely and frightening prospect for many, since all further education colleges and many schools are independent institutions without the support and resources of a local education authority. Thirty years of so of hard labour in the classroom would then in all likelihood be followed by unemployment and impoverishment. If she wishes to avoid leaving a legacy of fear and bitterness in the profession, Mrs Shepherd needs urgently to re-examine her proposals to eliminate such injustice. **STEVEN TURNBULL**
Torquay, Devon

Sir: Gillian Shepherd is right to observe that schools and colleges will not acknowledge all the costs of premature retirement schemes if costs are pooled rather than assigned to particular schools. But who

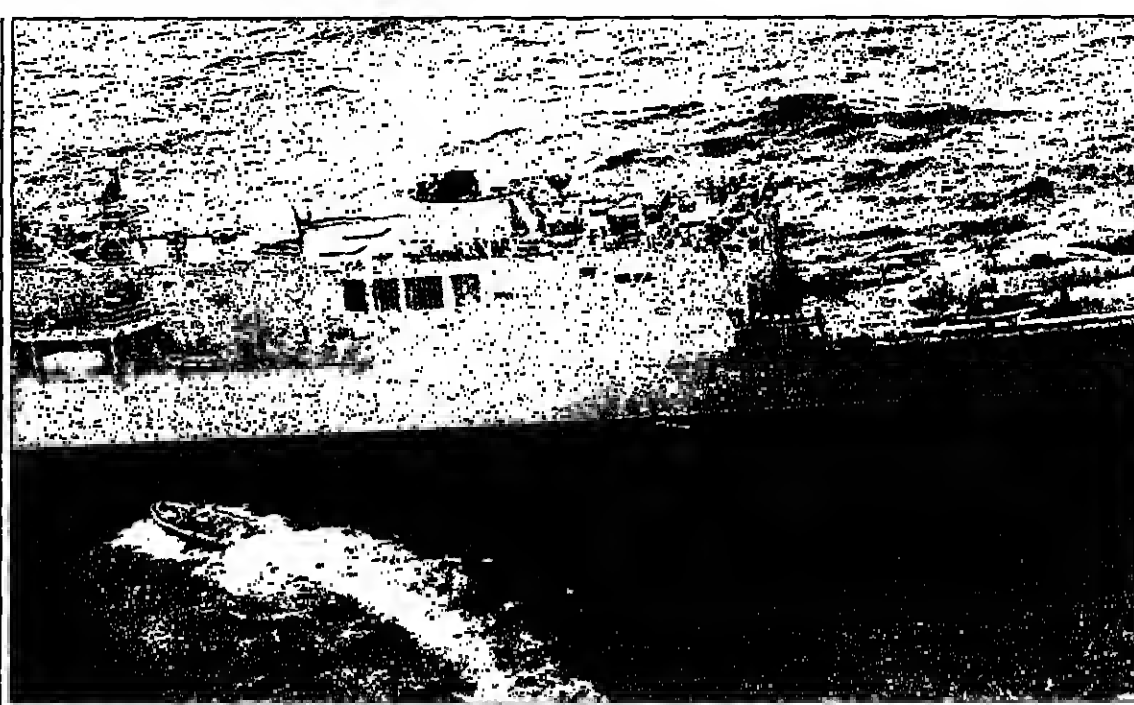
designed the current regime? Conservative governments did so. It is rather rich for a free market orientated politician to lament that schools and teachers acted in their own best interest within a pattern of incentives designed by Conservatives. The problem exists in the form that it does because of the spurious policy of treating educational institutions as though they were firms. **JOHN OLIVER**
London EC2

Sir: Over 40 years or more, teachers have paid 6 per cent of their salaries, and their employers more than that, into a "National" Pension Fund. In other words, their pension contributions have disappeared into the public purse, which, until recently, has paid out less than this in pensions, and thereby made a profit.

If those contributions had been invested on behalf of the teachers, instead of being spent, it would seem unlikely that the present shortfall could have occurred. A private pension fund would be legally bound to invest, yet a government is not. **GEOFF HINCHLIFFE**
Theford, Norfolk

Sir: May one ask what right Gillian Shepherd has to use the teachers' ailing pension fund in resource "front-line education"? **JAMES WILSON**
Banbury, Oxfordshire

Sir: The Education Secretary expresses disbelief that four out of five teachers opt for retirement before the age of 60. The reasons, they say, cannot be genuine. Clearly they have not even considered the obvious: that the majority of teachers, tired of being told by everyone how second-rate they are, want to get out while they still have the odd shred of self-respect left. **MALCOLM BROWN**
Surrey



A rescue dinghy carrying the British yachtsman Tony Bullimore to safety on board the Australian navy frigate HMAS Adelaide on Thursday. Photograph: Reuters

Warning for those in needless peril on the sea

Sir: In view of the recent incidents involving single-handed sailors off the south-west coast of Australia it is time that the Marine Safety Agency took action to discourage such persons from putting to sea alone for long periods of time.

They clearly cannot comply with the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea, since they are unable to keep a "proper look-out by sight and by hearing" at all times, as required by Rule 5. In addition, no prudent mariner would put themselves in the position of being unable to deal with emergencies on their own craft or to assist others because of lack of personnel. My own experience is that professional mariners do not regard such foolhardy expeditions in a favourable light. **BARRY LEAHY**
Master Mariner Cardiff

Sir: If a public subscription were opened to help to repay the Australian government for the costs incurred in the rescue of the British and French sailors, I believe there would be many like myself who would be glad to contribute. The story has been a heart-warming relief from the rest of the news – and the weather – in this awful grey January. **MICHAEL ADAMS**
Budleigh Salterton, Devon

Sir: It is fair to ask, you say (leading article, 8 January), whether expensive and commercialised ways of getting your kicks on sea, land and air should be subsidised. No doubt the yachtsmen will speak for themselves, but in the context of mountain rescue the question has been examined by the Scottish Affairs Committee of the House of Commons as recently as last year.

The RAF mountain rescue teams in Scotland, Wales and England are in place to recover crashed aircraft, and if they were prevented from rescuing civilian climbers they would still have to be in place, and would still have to get their weekly training. The civilian teams are self-financing, relying on contributions from their members and other mountaineers, and other fund-raising such as jumble sales. So where is the subsidy? **FRANK CARD**
RAF Mountain Rescue Association
Baintree, Essex

Sir: Of course we're all very pleased that Richard Branson and his crew are safe, but can somebody tell us what happened to the people down below when the six-tonne canister fell on them? **FABIAN ACKER**
London SE22

Quit the City for a high-pressure life

Sir: Hamish McRae's contributions to national debate are always worth a read. In today's article ("Tax on the rich that delivers few votes and less revenue", 10 January), however, he perpetuates the false assumption that working for a charity is less high-pressure than a job in the City.

As a former investment banker who moved to the charity sector three years ago, I can assure you that the challenges faced by charity managers – increasing competition for funds, pressures for improved performance from donors and beneficiaries, anticipating the impact of the rapid changes in the sector's environment in the UK and overseas – lead to as many, if not more, sleepless nights as are suffered by those working in financial services.

What is wholly different is the personal satisfaction that comes from seeing our efforts lead to real improvements in the lives of our beneficiaries rather than to increases in profits, market share or our own wage packet. **NIGEL SABBY-SOFFE**
Director of Finance and IT
Actionaid
London N19

Family tyrants

Sir: How can the family be a foundation of democracy, when parents are not elected? **SIMON BINNEY**
Cambridge

Tories to blame for the beggars' plight

Sir: Tony Blair says that homelessness and begging on the streets are not to be tolerated; some commentators see this as an attack on the people who are begging (report, 2 January).

Was I born in a golden age? For 35 years I lived in towns such as Norwich, St Albans and Swindon without seeing a single beggar. Begging was something which happened in the Third World. Then suddenly, within a year or two of the 1987 election, young people began begging on the streets. The effect was to inspire guilt, anger and a feeling that we could not be part of an inclusive prosperous society nor proud to be British.

Tory spokesmen wished us to believe that human nature was at fault (as though it had suddenly changed that year) and that the beggars were idle and feckless people: certainly it could not be connected with the changes in eligibility for the dole of vulnerable young people who moved away from their parents to seek their first job. These changes occurred against the backdrop of a Chancellor transferring money to wealthy and middle-income people in the form of tax cuts.

Through a boom, recession and recovery, the beggars have remained on our streets. The Tories won't change their welfare and housing policy to try to remove the problem, preferring to hulk individual beggars

responsible for their predicament. Will New Labour do differently? **NICK WATTS**
Chippenhams, Wiltshire

Sir: I would heartily agree with Suzanne Moore's article on safer streets (8 January). We need a better, richer street life.

Beggars are an important ingredient – they do not need purging from our streets but should be encouraged to do better. The old busters who worked the West End theatre queues of the 1950s were part of an honourable and richly inventive tradition with not a guitar among them. The man who made ladders out of rolled-up newspaper, climbing three storeys on a windless day; the bone and spoon man; the woman with the strident voice who sang "Mother McCree" in your ear until you paid her to go away; the three acrobats and a barrel-organ in Leicester Square; the old gent with the wind-up gramophone who did a tap dance routine. All these, and many more, made street life entertaining, rich and enjoyable.

After all, whatever the police and the bureaucrats do, we shall never really be rid of them, nor can they be confined to tourist areas. The more they are purged the worse will be their performance. Let us encourage them to give us good entertainment. **FR MICHAEL DAY**
London E5

Brazil: making ancestral lands secure

Sir: Whilst it is true that the Brazilian government should "put more resources into ensuring that indigenous lands are respected" as advocated in the article "Tribes who won't see the forest for the sleaze" (4 January), the key solution is one of land ownership. Brazil remains the only country in Latin America which does not recognise indigenous peoples' right to own their land. If Indians in Brazil are ever going to live in security on their ancestral lands, recognition of communal title is the fundamental prerequisite.

In Peru, for example, many indigenous communities have acquired communal land title around their villages and are in control of their territory; this has greatly reduced numbers of non-

Indians invading and colonising their land.

In Brazil all too often powerful landowners and companies use the courts to obtain or uphold dubious title within Indian land, which constitutionally belongs to the state. One shocking example has just occurred in the south of Brazil, where a cattle rancher claiming title has forcibly evicted a community of Guarani Indians from an area demarcated as indigenous by the federal authorities. Banished to living in shacks by the roadside, the Indians now face a potentially long drawn-out battle in the courts in a climate of intimidation. **STEPHEN CORRY**
Director General
Survival
London WC1

Free Ashmolean

Sir: Despite having spent four months in Oxford, Professor Larsen (letter, 7 January) has clearly not visited the Ashmolean Museum, otherwise he would have discovered that, despite what he claims, it is free of charge to all visitors at all times.

We have no current plans for introducing charges. **Professor CHRISTOPHER WHITE**
Director
Ashmolean Museum
Oxford

Prison searches

Sir: The governor of Birmingham prison had instructed his staff to search visitors on the same basis as prison staff, that is to say, periodically ("Anger at search exemption for prison chiefs", 7 January).

Although all visitors and staff are searched when entering high-security prisons, Birmingham does not fall into that category, and procedures vary according to security circumstances. Ann Widdecombe has visited more than 100 prisons while Prison Minister, and is regularly searched. **A J PEARSON**
Director of Security and Programmes
HM Prison Service
London SW1

LETTER from THE EDITOR

With the election campaign in effect begun, those readers who have decided to remain in the country are already starting to attack us for being either pathetically pro-Labour or dumbly pro-Conservative. Since the letters are arriving at a similar rate and since I have been again informed by senior people in all the parties that *The Independent* is regarded as "unfriendly", it seems to me that we are probably – on balance, and not every day – about right.

Yet we are biased, of course – in editorials, on the comment pages, and in cartoons. We are biased towards our own agenda, which has grown with the paper, and which is based on political reform, free markets and pro-Europeanism. Those views, argued in detail in numerous leaders, provide a template against which we can measure the parties' positions.

And then what? First, this paper will never tell its readers how to vote – that is a patronising, offensive habit, which assumes that newspaper readers are docile mental serfs to be shooed into one pen or another.

But second, I think we should come to some kind of collective conclusion by the end of the campaign – how we would use our vote if we had one. That doesn't mean we become a party paper, any more than a thoughtful, independent-minded voter who finally plumps one way or another on polling day necessarily becomes a party supporter from then on. But after years of finger-stabbing on every issue, it seems a little odd to suddenly turn coy on this one.

Not yet, though – despite a moment at the beginning of the week when it seemed as if we were going to have to come off the fence. Tony Blair was reported to have converted to voting reform, which is a key *Independent* issue, and the main missing element of Labour reformism. How could we pretend to be neutral between two sides, one of which was radically reformist and pro-European and the other of which wasn't? A nervous moment, with a slight squirm of trousered buttocks on this one.

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editorial chair-leather. Then Mr Blair denied it all.

One of the most engaging complaints of the week arrived unsigned and without an address. It purported to be from Aaseel, or the Association for the Advancement of American English in European Culture.

The pith of the communication runs thus: "Hi there. Congratulations, you're the kind person we would like to thank for all your help... Here's merely a few of our successes which YOU have made possible, just by saying: Guy, Mowie, Smart, Railroad, Jerk, Vacation, Butt, Garbage, Trunk, Hood, Snurp, Sundown, and so on... So keep up the good work and wish YOUR help, the crappiest dead English of Milton, Elliot, Lawrence, Wolf."

Since all the parties regard us as 'unfriendly', it seems to me that we are, on balance, probably about right

Speight, Wood and so many more will be dead and buried. Alert (smart) readers will have detected a note of irony, which may or may not relate to the misspellings of two of the Great Names. (And which Wood, by the way?)

There are two things that need to be said about Americanism. The first is that it is very irritating, but the second is that it is, in some cases, irresistible. Language, like culture, is a struggle for survival between the strong and the weak, the centre and the periphery. It's a struggle which dialects and whole languages are constantly losing. The price we pay for speaking a successful world language (unlike, say, Dutch) is that it is constantly changed and eroded at home by how it is used elsewhere. Linguistically, there are many worse fates than that.

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

No director is a god. If he's a god, or a tyrant or an autocrat, or a master then he is actually stopping the creative processes happening, because he limits where things may go – Sir Peter Hall. As soon as paint starts flying around, I will probably forget what happened – Lisa Potts, teacher, 21, on her return to school six months after she battled to save pupils from a machete attacker. I wouldn't go into space if you paid me. There is quite enough otherness here on our planet for me to get immersed in – David Bowie, rock star, 50.

He was such a gent to everybody that we couldn't get cross with him. He was dead straight about why he was mining: he needs the money – Anne Seagill, after leading a protest against openness mining to Chatsworth, Derbyshire, home of the Duke of Devonshire. I had no choice but to drop all pretence at restraint and courtesy. I determined that if I did not fight bare-knuckled, the pro-monarchy view would be crushed into submission – Frederick Forsyth, best-selling author, on the Carthage TV monarchy debate. In politics you sometimes despair of having a sensible debate – Tony Blair.

I think men believe what they see in the movies – that I am going to throw my head back and have an orgasm in two minutes. I have never done that. It is implausible – Sharon Stone, film star.

the saturday story

As old as yesterday's newspapers

After longer than anyone can really remember, two ancient institutions of the press – Peregrine Worsthorne and Bernard Levin – are hanging up their quills. Peter Popham looks at the passing of a way of life

The gutters of Fleet Street ran with tears this week when the news that first Sir Peregrine Worsthorne of the *Sunday Telegraph*, then Bernard Levin of *The Times*, were departing their ancient, hoary, legendary, prickly, abusive, provocative, preposterous, exhibitionistic, harnack-encrusted, and not necessarily always extremely widely read columns.

Well they didn't actually – the gutters, that is. Fleet Street (you may have noticed, or not) is no more. It is only a figure of speech, and a misleading one at that. So this week no community of hacks gathered at El Vino's with the perfect excuse for a few extra rounds. No gloating wakes were held. Gossip trundled around the town, but its bearers were probably sober, and the medium mostly telephonic.

The *Times*'s editor, Peter Slothard, has finally bearded the chorus of voices which have been telling him for some time that Levin's column had gone off (though he "will continue to write elsewhere in *The Times*", we are assured). Worsthorne was brutally fired by *Sunday Telegraph* editor Dominic Lawson earlier this week. He got news of his sacking by letter – with a week's notice after 44 years on the *Telegraph* papers. It was the culmination of a long series of disagreements: Worsthorne allegedly vetoed Lawson's attempt to join the Beefsteak club, and was himself ejected from the board of *The Spectator* in 1995, when it was edited by Lawson, after publicly

condemning an article in the magazine. Fleet Street, then, is dead, and two of its most enduring monuments are no more. As journalists are wont to do, we conduct a rough head count of the poor old huffers still on side, tot up how much longer we ourselves can seriously expect to be smiled on, and mourn the passing of an era.

For anyone under 40 or even 50, the amazing thing about Worsthorne (73 now) and Levin (68) is how incredibly long ago they got started. I am 45, and Levin was already famous before I was out of short trousers. As "Taper" in *The Spectator*, he shot to stardom in the 1950s by practically inventing single-handedly the idea of a parliamentary report that was chock full of gags. He then moved to *The Daily Mail* and became its fierce, fiery, fearless theatre critic, in the days when Kenneth Tynan on *The Observer* and Harold Hobson on the *Sunday Times* had made the theatre review the sexiest spot in the paper.

It was around this time, staying up daintily late one Saturday night, that I first became aware of Bernard Levin's existence when he lambasted some particularly disgusting political wrong in a stand-up spot on the satirical show *That Was the Week that Was*. Perhaps this was the occasion when he called prime minister Sir Alec Douglas-Home a cretin – I forget. Anyway, that ephemeral moment was scorched onto the nation's brain pan when a man from the audience got up out of his seat, walked on to the set

and punched Levin in the face. It later emerged that he was the husband of an actress Levin had cruelly rubbished in one of his terrifying reviews. The assault, the man said, was his protest against corrupt theatre criticism.

That was Levin back then: the gadfly's gadfly. Into the relatively gentle, benign, backscratching world of London journalism of the 1950s, a clubbable place where satire was something by Juvenal you'd translated at school, and humour was of the whimsical Beachcomber variety, angry young Levin exploded, scattering vituperation in all directions: initially at practically anyone in power, subsequently at anyone else who got up his nose – lawyers, judges, academics, animal rights campaigners, whoever. He introduced a new pleasure into the newspaper reader's life: vicious cruelty.

Peregrine Worsthorne was also firing on all cylinders by the

dawn of the Sixties, having moved to the *Telegraph* in 1953 after working on the *Glasgow Herald* and *The Times*. He joined the *Sunday Telegraph* when it started up in 1961, as deputy editor – a position he held for 25 years, before briefly becoming editor.

It is a little odd and counter-intuitive to yoke Worsthorne and Levin together in an article, despite their emergence at roughly the same time, because they are very different types. Levin was one of the first Jews in post-war British journalism to fashion a persona – brilliant, prickly, shrill, gratuitously aggressive – which could be taken as a red rag by anti-semites. Worsthorne, child of Belgian bankers on one side and English aristocrats on the other, by contrast presented himself as the last, defiant voice of the ruling class. Yet in this very difference there are points in

common, a combination of courage, exhibitionism and perversity. Both were almost equally provocative, for totally different reasons.

Worsthorne's politics had a consistency to which Levin seems never to have aspired. In the days when one-nation Conservatism was the only type there was, and liberalism, modernisation and progress were the common cant of all the parties, Worsthorne was shockingly out of tune, lamenting the passing of the old days and railing at the new barbarism.

He was an entirely preposterous figure, like something out of an early Waugh novel or a Coward play. The only reason it worked was that behind the unacceptable rhetoric was a figure of intriguing weirdness, who for all his insistence on Olds England and its values hardly seemed English at all in many important respects: a flop noted for his pink bow ties and red socks, his swept back hair

and finely chiselled nostrils, a man who would often burst into tears in public, whose Englishness often seemed a hilarious camp performance.

By the early Sixties, both these personae were firmly in place, firmly entrenched in the public mind. In the 35-odd years since then a great deal has changed. Newspapers, proprietors, technologies, trade unions, ideologies and the Berlin Wall have come and gone. Fleet Street itself, the vortex of British journalism for 200 years, has been turned over to hankers and the like. The whole context in which those voices, those images, that vituperative rhetoric came into existence has been blown away. Nothing of it remains. But Levin (established for many years now on *The Times*) and Worsthorne have remained, lonely, gesturing figures ranting away on the blasted plain.

The later Worsthorne is more readily admired than the

later Levin. With the successive victories of Mrs Thatcher, Worsthorne's perennial views gradually became almost part of the consensus, and he wound up as a knight. But he has always been uncomfortable having too many people agreeing with him: an old friend recalls that he used to go into El Vino's in Fleet Street, stay long enough to gather the general consensus on the hot topic of the moment, then go away and write the diametrical opposite.

So basking in the Thatcherite sunshine was not something that this soul of perversity could stand doing indefinitely. Lately he began rumbling about the "bourgeois triumphalism" of the Eighties; more recently still (on 15 December 1996) he has gone much further, championing Kenneth Clarke to be the Tories' next leader – and this in the lions' den of Europhobia. But Worsthorne has always had a streak of reckless courage: when Conrad Black took over as the *Telegraph*'s proprietor, he wasted no time describing him in print as "domineering, verbose and discouragingly pious."

Levin's progress, despite the huge fame he enjoys around the world, has been less sure. The ferocity that marked him out died long ago, and recent attempts to revive it have an air of desperation: in September, for example, he began a column with 109 consecutive adjectives – "worm-eaten, exhausted, dishonest" etc, etc – to describe the Government. More often though he is seen in his pipe-and-slippers mode, uttering unexceptionable remarks such as "I have always admired Frank Field. His work is sensible and honest..." or "Australians are open and immediately friendly." Too often to Levin's recent articles there is the sensation of someone talking rather pointlessly to himself – less Speakers Corner than one of the more depressing creations of Samuel Beckett.

In that respect Levin's fate is exemplary. Today all these people – Worsthorne in his perfect country villa, Levin in London, the rest of us bent over our screens in office blocks dotted across the metropolises – we're all alone. More than any other department of journalism, column-writing is public speaking. It thrived in the era when journalists met and talked and drank. When that era ended, as the careers of Levin and Worsthorne demonstrate, it went into a long stagnation. Today it is ever more forced, artificial, narcissistic.



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It would also mean that someone cares – somewhere somebody is thinking of her, and her efforts to protect her child.

Children's Aid Direct has delivered baby boxes full of essential items directly into the hands of 23,000 mothers in Bosnia – many of whom will be living in war-damaged housing and in very basic conditions this winter.

Please, if you possibly can, send a baby box to Bosnia this winter – and help a mother keep her baby safe.

Just call us on 0994 600610 or complete the coupon below. Feel free to send a message of support to a Bosnian mother – we'll put it in your baby box for you.

What's inside?

- 13 nappies (100% cotton-muslin)
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- 100 baby wipes in a tub
- 2 zinc and castor oil
- 3 mild baby soaps
- 600ml baby shampoo
- 250-300ml baby lotion
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All enclosed in a re-usable, waterproof box.

(From time to time the contents of the box may vary depending on the needs of the children.)

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OR please complete and return this form.

Please send _____ baby box(es) at £30 each on my behalf.

I enclose a cheque for £_____ (total amount) made payable to Children's Aid Direct

OR please debit £_____ from my ☐ Visa ☐ Access ☐ Switch

Card number _____

Last three digits of Switch card no. _____ Switch issue no. _____

Expiry date _____ Signature _____

Name (s) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone _____

If you would like to send a message to a Bosnian mother, please send it with your donation and we will put it in your baby box. Please send to: Children's Aid Direct, Dept 500, FREEPOST, Reading, RG1 1HR.

Children's Aid Direct

jo brand's week

Recent tragedies involving ecstasy have resulted in oversensitivity on the part of many adults, as demonstrated by the recent Polo furore. Polo manufacturers were delighted when they came up with the idea of selling a limited edition of the discarded holes with the letters P, L or O on them. Having the appearance of small white pills, various teachers became alarmed and contacted poisons units round the country, with the result that these little sweets were put on a national database.

This illustrates, yet again, the gulf that exists in the perception that grown-ups and younger people have of drugs. I have had a bab at most drugs and as a teenager was told by someone about making tea out of cigarettes for asthmatics. They had benzadrine in them and gave you a good buzz. I mentioned it to a friend of mine who made some and consequently tried to jump out of a window. This fact was reported to my parents, who went absolutely bonkers and from that point on, I fear, suffered terrible visions of me lying in the gutter with a syringe sticking out of my arm. I personally knew this would never happen, but it's hard to convince your mum and dad of that when you're 15. Under-twenties will never stop taking drugs, and

unfortunately, education, not blanket prevention, is the only way forward.

A study in New York has discovered that shopping is good for women's health. Dr Rex Metzger claimed that the sheer pleasure of making personal purchases does something positive for a woman's system and seems to give temporary immunity from ageing. So apparently shopaholics are often stronger and slimmer. The study showed that it was best to shop about 17 hours a week – especially for clothes.

This sounds like a right load of cobblers to me. Maybe Dr Rex is in cahoots with some of the big department stores. He also sounds like some doctor out of a Woody Allen film, sending his patients off on marathon spending sprees to cure their middle-class ennui.

I'm sure most women don't have enough money to last 17 hours a week. Even if they did, I'd like to think that the vast majority couldn't bear to spend that amount of time indulging in such an empty pursuit. Still, anything to keep them on the streets.

The Tory MP Jerry Hayes seems to have been well and truly destroyed, whether the reports of his affair with a Commons researcher turn out

to be true or not. For if they are true, yet another "happily married man" will be revealed as something we never thought he was. Many people see this as the ultimate humiliation for Mr Hayes. Obviously they never saw him on the James Whale show.

As the Tories know, the problem with setting yourself up as a shining example for others to follow is that when you get caught out, that proverbial substance really hits the fan. So it was this week, when Turkish police allegedly found Mushu Gunduz, leader of a radical Islamic sect, in flagrante with a young girl. The woman maintains that Gunduz has used hundreds of girls as sex slaves.

This is a true case of having your cake and eating it, not to mention "don't do as I do, do as I say". As usual, it is the poor old women and the weak and

helpless that have to sit back and take the abuse while the powerful please themselves.

What a gloriously revealing funfight the debate about the monarchy was on Tuesday night. Please remind me never to read a Frederick Forsyth novel again. What an unpleasant man.

Peter Stringfellow, (knock me down with a feather) a supporter of the monarchy, arguing fiercely that it is good for tourism, and made the point that if the monarchy was abolished there would still be poverty. Of course there would, Pete, because money-grabbing businessmen like you would still exist. Royal Family first; you next, mate. I reckon.

I am not sure that the programme would be graced with the name "debate". It was more like *Gladiators*, with the expectation on my

part that at any moment, as another person with unpopular opinions was shouted down, the chant "Another One Bites The Dust" would strike up in the background. The heckling was of the usual standard nature and the arguments were simplistic. A triumph of *Sunnesque* trivia.

Scotland was the only republican area at the end of the night. Another temptation – along with the deep-fried Mars Bars – to move up there.

"Boys will be boys." This cliché is checked out whenever a good old bloke sets off on an adventure from which he might not return – a dangerous climb, a land speed record or indeed a round-the-world balloon flight.

In my book, the sort of feats to be admired are those of kindness, generosity and fairness. I'd have been a lot more impressed if Richard Branson had used the balloon money to increase his staff wages or something of that nature. Now the mission has failed and another load of money has dribbled down the drain. Popular opinion may say that it's his money and he can do what he wants with it. That doesn't stop some of us thinking it's a crime to chuck it away on what amounted to an almost instantaneous failure.



Dur
anc
ne

The public reaction to the Prince and Princess of Wales' departure from the country was a mixture of relief and sadness. The Prince's departure was a relief to many who had been weary of the royal family's presence in the country. The Princess's departure was a sadness to many who had been fond of her. The Prince's departure was a relief to many who had been weary of the royal family's presence in the country. The Princess's departure was a sadness to many who had been fond of her.

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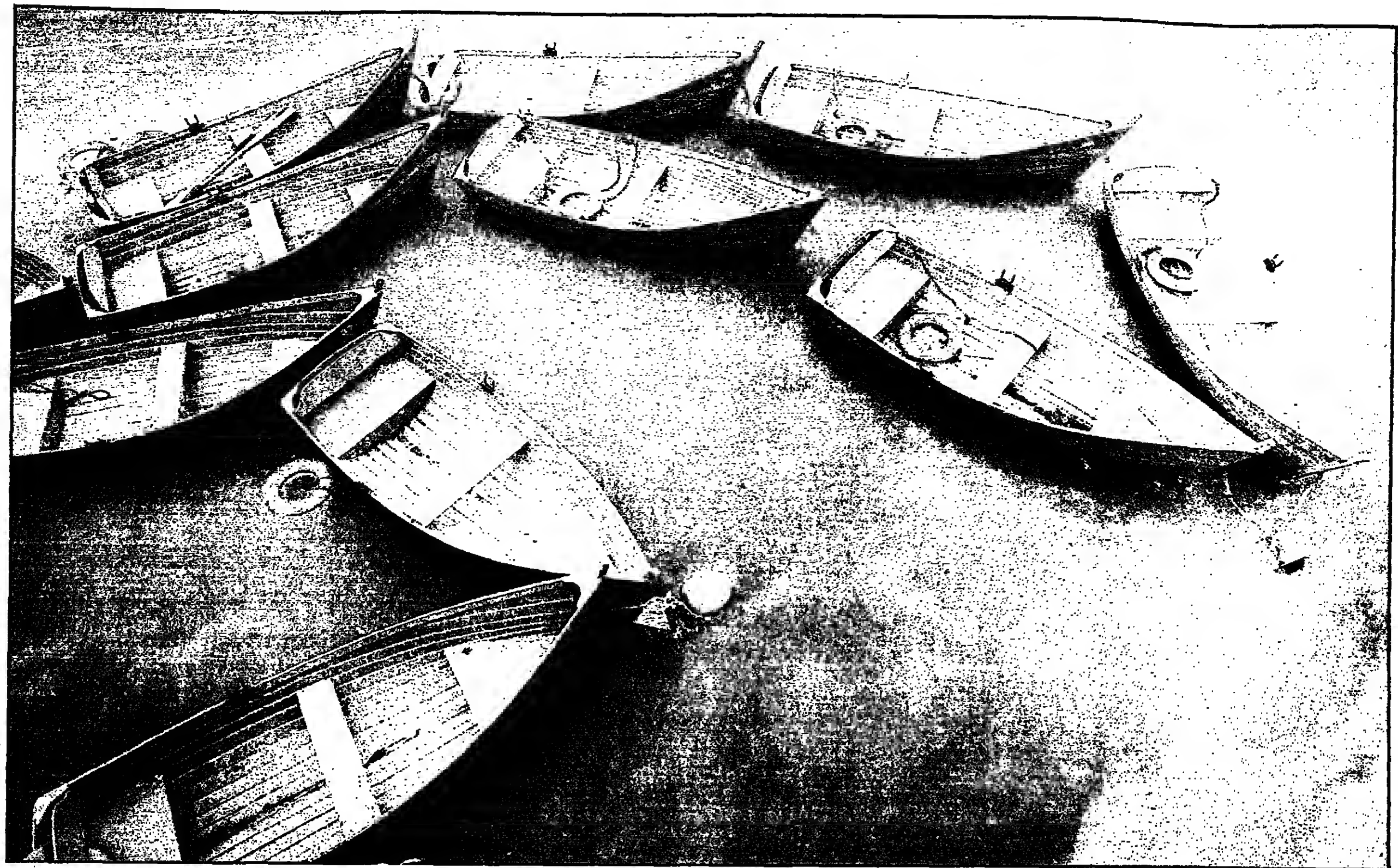


IMAGE OF THE WEEK Normally they bob around in carefree summer days loaded with be-shorted, shirt-sleeved sun-lovers. Now, as the country stays locked into the New Year - New Ice Age, the boats, on the Serpentine in London's Hyde Park, stay wedged by the ice into a frozen arc. Photograph by Tony Buckingham. Taken with a Canon EOS 50E 24mm lens using a Kodak multi-speed film. 1/60 seconds at F/11

the long weekend

THE INDEPENDENT • SATURDAY 11 JANUARY 1997

The narrator of Beryl Bainbridge's *Every Man for Himself* (published by Duckworth) is Morgan, the young nephew of the shipping line's owner, who sails on the Titanic's maiden voyage in April 1912. In this extract from the first chapter, he accompanies his friend Charlie Melchett on a trip around the new liner.

Melchett was keen on visiting E deck, mostly on account of a broad alleyway, known to the crew by the name of Scotland Road after some street in Liverpool, which ran the length of the vessel.

He had visited the northern city as a child, he eagerly told me, on the occasion of a horse running in his grandfather's colours in the Grand National steeplechase. I did tell him, knowledgeable as I was in regards to plumbing in the steerage accommodation, that it was unlikely he would find the thoroughfare thronged with race-horses, but he was adamant.

We duly descended by elevator and roamed up and down a tiled corridor intersected by iron staircases leading to working departments of indescribable dullness. Melchett, trying hard to remain animated, wilted.

"What is the point," he complained, "of giving names to places that bear no resemblance to the past?"

"The point is," I stressed, "that they draw attention to the origin of the reference. Think of Waterloo station." After which exchange we fortunately encountered a young seaman who was persuaded to conduct us over the lower decks. Reluctant at first, then swayed by the promise of a generous tip, he led us below.

Though stunted in growth, his eyes shone with intelligence. He said his name was Riley and his home town Liverpool, where he lived with his "Mam" and five siblings. Considerably bucked at the coincidence, Melchett boasted he knew the town quite well. "My grandfather," he said, "owned a horse that finished second in the Grand National of 1901... I can't for the life of me remember its name."

"Me Dad," replied Riley, "had a donkey called Dickey-Sam that pulled a rag and bone cart." Melchett said that was interesting, and turned pink again. Apart from a certain casualness of manner Riley proved to be the best of guides, for though the English he spoke could have benefited from an interpreter his knowledge of the ship was profound and his appreciation infectious. On F deck, starboard side, beneath which the main engines were housed, he delivered a lecture on their capacity and capabilities. The vessel, I understood him to inform us, was powered by two four-cylinder,

WORDS OF THE WEEK

Every week we open this section with a picture to admire, to treasure. From today we will also offer words - spoken, declaimed, written as poetry or prose - which will in some way reflect an event or mood of the week. Today, an extract from the Whitbread Award-winning novel by Beryl Bainbridge



triple expansion, reciprocating steam engines. Each could deliver 15,000 horsepower at 75 revolutions, producing a speed of 21 knots. Aft of these, a low-pressure turbine recycled steam from the main engines to drive the three propellers. He was wrong in this last assumption, in that it was only the central propeller that was thus driven, but I held my tongue.

"There's also four 400 kilowatt steam-powered generators," he said, "with dynamos capable of providing enough electricity to work the machinery control-

ling the winches, cranes, passenger and service lifts, heaters, cookers, water-tight doors, the internal telephone exchange and the Marconi wireless set to a range of 350 miles. It can go further at night," he concluded. "Though I'm buggered if I know why." Melchett, shamelessly taking advantage of his enthusiasm, pressed to be allowed a glimpse of such wonders. A glimpse was all we got; barely a minute after we reached G deck and Riley had dragged back the iron door of Number 1 engine room we were approached by an assistant engineer and ordered about our

business. Brief as the moment had been, we had nonetheless clearly seen the awesome monster rearing on splayed legs from the glittering avenue below, its gigantic head vibrating inside its steel helmet, its thunderous intestines of lubricated pistons and crank-shafts pounding and pumping in perpetual motion.

Riley was sent packing. I'm ashamed to say neither Melchett nor I put in a word for him, nor was there time to palm him his tip. Escorted by the engineer, we were returned by twists and turns and much tapping up of metal stairs to E deck, where, after sternly reminding us that unauthorised explorations of engine and boiler rooms were against company safety rules, he left us.

I could have told him who I was and put him in his place but was loath to puncture his sense of self-importance, having had my own prick on numerous occasions, and with more cause, by my Uncle Morgan.

Melchett and I remained silent while we continued our inspection of the ship, and when it was done and we had sunk into the leather armchairs in the foyer of A deck we still had no words.

It wasn't the lavish furnishings of the public rooms, the doors inlaid with mother of pearl, the panelled corridors of oak and maple, the shimmer of gilt and brass and cut glass that made us catch our breath, anymore than the twenty-one-light candelabra hung from the massive dome above the sweep of that imperial staircase.

We had spent our lives in splendid houses and grand hotels and for us there was nothing new under the sun, nothing that is, in the way of opulence: it was the sublime thermodynamics of the Titanic's marine engineering that took us by the throat. Dazzled, I was thinking that if the fate of man was connected to the order of the universe, and if one could equate the scientific workings of the engines with just such a reciprocal universe, why then, nothing could go wrong with my world.

I don't know what Melchett was thinking, beyond he was pale and his left knee was bouncing up and down as though in imitation of those connecting rods oscillating below the water line.



John Walsh meets... Michael Flatley
"Dance is about focusing. Focus focus focus" page 3

Nureyev: shedding light on darkness
TV documentary is too slanted says John Percival page 4

All across the nation...
Hippy, happy daze in San Francisco page 9

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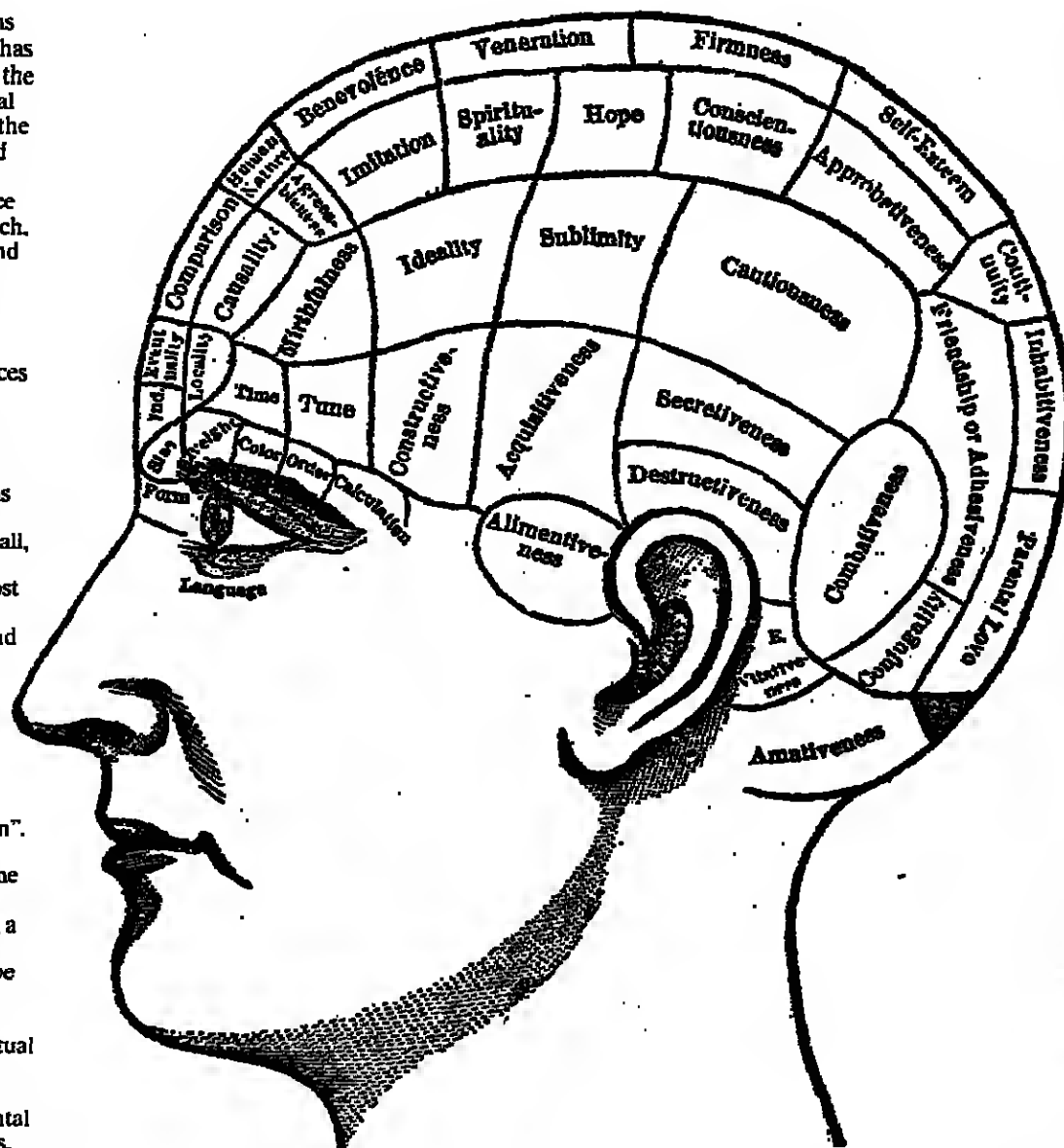
Bump-starting a stalled pseudo-science

Modern discoveries are attracting new converts to the ancient art of phrenology

The discovery, earlier this week, that women's brains shrink during pregnancy has drawn attention again to the relationship between the physical characteristics of the brain and the psychological characteristics and capacities of its owner. Such questions were once the province of the old art of phrenology which, to judge by a quick search around the more dubious nooks of the Internet is making a bit of a comeback. Indeed, our by no means exhaustive browse revealed more than 600 references to phrenology on the Web.

For the benefit of the phrenological neophyte, here is how it works: The science of phrenology was developed in Austria in the late 18th century by Franz Joseph Gall, one of the founders of modern neurology. At a time when almost nothing was known about the functioning of the brain, Gall had the amazing insight that different regions of the brain were responsible for different faculties. He even identified the cerebral cortex as "the highest level of the brain and that the development of this area characterised mammals and man". Where he seems to have erred, however, was in his belief that the brain comprised many several distinct organs, each controlling a separate aspect of personality.

As Douglas Adams fans will be pleased to hear, the full phrenological system identifies precisely 42 "moral and intellectual faculties" as Gall called them. Here's the official list: Amativeness, Conjugality, Parental Love, Friendship, Inhabitiveness, Continuity, Vitativeness, Combativeness, Destructiveness, Alimentiveness, Acquisitiveness, Secretiveness, Cautiousness, Approbativeness, Self-Esteem, Firmness, Conscientiousness, Hope & Expectation, Spirituality, Veneration, Benevolence, Constructiveness, Ideality, Sublimity, Imitation, Mirthfulness, Individuality, Form, Size, Weight, Colour, Order, Calculation, Locality, Eventuality, Time, Time, Language, Causality, Comparison, Human nature, Agreeableness.



Every one of those was identified with a specific site in the brain, and the assumption of phrenology was that superior development of any of the faculties would be revealed by the contours of the cranium. So, having learnt where everything is, you have only to inspect people's heads in the proper manner to discover their innermost secrets. Here's how you start: Place the third finger of each hand upon

the head, just at the top of the ears; let the lower side of the third finger be even with the upper part of the ear; that finger then rests upon Destructiveness. Then spread the second finger about one eighth of an inch from the other, and it will rest upon Secretiveness. Let the end of your longest finger come as far forward as the fore part of the ears, and they will then rest upon these two organs. (From a mid-19th century manual on

phrenology by Orson Squire Fowler and Lorenzo Niles Fowler.)

Even though its fundamental basis became increasingly undermined by psychological and neurological research, phrenology continued to be practised until the 1930s, by which time Americans could even have their head bumps read by an automatic electrical phrenology machine which printed out a report on ticker-tape.

Considering the continuing appeal of astrology, and the growth in academically doubtful methods of character assessment such as graphology, the almost complete demise of phrenology is perhaps surprising. It has, after all, only three major defects:

Firstly, there was never much evidence to support the view that the contours of the brain follow the bones of the skull as closely as the phrenologists would have liked. Secondly, in the brain, as in other organs, there is little evidence to correlate size with efficacy. And thirdly, Gall and his followers seem to have got their bumps in the wrong place. For example "Broca's area", now known to be responsible for language, is nowhere near Gall's Language hump, but seems to lie somewhere between Constructiveness and Ideality.

So Phrenology is based on two false premises, which, even if they were correct, would be giving out quite the wrong results anyway. There are, however, two good things about phrenology. The first, and best, is that it provides an excellent excuse for fondling the head of someone whom you would like to get to know better. After mastering palmistry in order to indulge in a little harmless hand-caressing, phrenology is the next logical step for any shy chromantic suitor to take.

For the less tender-hearted, however, we must mention the newly developed technique of "Phrenotherapy". The idea of this "bold new discipline", as its inventor Kevin Kelm describes it, is to improve people's personalities by rearranging their head bumps. With a mallet. Do not try this at home.

Games People Play

Pandora Melly explores an explorer's pastimes.

Michael Alexander, 76, explorer and writer

I've just been given an outrageous little book for Christmas about the games played by Surrealists. "How do you reconcile a love for women with a taste for sodomy?" That was a question put to Paul Eluard by Guy Tanguy, but there are some good limericks in there too.

I make up limericks about my friends. Listen to this one: "A dirty old vicar from Chester/laid hands on a choirgirl and blessed her/in order to test her/he pressed and caressed her/'til they came to arrest the molester."

I have several friends who make up limericks; an American girl in Paris, she's made up some quite good ones, and an Italian friend who's a diplomat. He writes them all down. You should see his book, he's got lots of them, he collects them, you see.

I can't remember exactly when I started writing them - far too long ago - but I have sessions with

friends at the Chelsea Arts Club. Here's another one: "There was a young girl from Ceylon/who locked herself up in the job/when they knocked down the door/she was flat on the floor/and they found she'd not been but she'd gone."

Edward Lear's not terribly good; he doesn't bother much with first and last lines. It's better to get some internal rhyming, then it's a minor art form. This one's my favourite: "There was a young man from Bengal/who went to a fancy dress ball/he thought he would risk it/take a dog to the hall." Not one of mine, but I've always liked it. I can see it all happening, can't you? I'm afraid I've become a bit of a limerick bore. You know, rattle them off, and don't let the other man get his limerick in.

In case of failed inspiration "The Penguin Book of Limericks", edited by E. O. Parrot, is available from any good bookshop for £3.99.

Don't junk it ... use it

Poaching eggs with tuna left-overs

Which would you rather have:

Two pastry cutters, one mousse ring, four muffin rings and an egg ring; or

Two pastry cutters, one mousse ring, four muffin rings, an egg ring, a safety can opener, 1.395kg of tuna and £6.79?

The trick is to buy the tin-opener (a Culinaire Safety Can Opener costing about £6 is needed for this job) then make the other kitchen items out of empty tuna tins (or any other suitably shaped tins with proper rims at the top and bottom). You just remove the tops and bottoms of the tins for your ready-made



Poached egg à la tuna can

pastry-cutters, egg rings, mousse rings and muffin rings. The budget above is based on prices quoted in a current "Chef's Choice" catalogue.

Bawn O'Beirne-Ranelagh



Henry VIII popped in for a game at the second Mary Rose Backgammon Tournament at the Hilton Hotel, Portsmouth last weekend. The prize, won by Nick Check of London, was this replica backgammon board, based on one recovered intact, complete with counters, from the wreck of the Mary Rose. The board was made by Chris Woolcott, King Henry's friend is Michael Crane of the British Isles Backgammon Association.

The Games Page is edited by William Hartston

New game of the week

Board games in general fall into five categories: there are race games, war games, acquisition games, knowledge games and partnership games. Ludo, chess, Monopoly, Scrabble and bridge. *Compatibility* from Spear's (price £19.99), falls into the last category and is typical of the genre in that it provides a framework for pairs of friends to become furious with each other.

The rules are simple: a word is selected at random from the "topic cards", and each player must then select, from their pack of "Compatibility cards" a number of pictures they consider most appropriate to the topic. You score points if you turn out to have selected the same pictures as your partner.

So, for example, when the topic word was "elope", I picked cards depicting a sunset, a mobile phone, a globe of the world, and a card indicating the word "sex" - all of which, I thought, added up to a picture of a romantic moonlight flit - and a picture of a lion, for the obvious pun elope-elope. My partner, however, picked a couple in formal wedding attire, a man kissing

a woman's neck, a red rose, the word "happiness" and a baby. Ridiculous. The kissing couple are obviously perfectly happy. Why should they elope? Even if they did, the wedding would hardly be a bridal gown and dress coat affair. And the suggestion that a baby is already on the way is, I think, quite out of order.

It was just as bad with "bricklayer". My partner picked the White House, a Skyscraper, a dingy-looking Italianate tenement building, a wooden framework of a new house, and a child's drawing of two girls outside their home. I could only think of the last bricklayer we employed, so picked a "Stop" sign (which he did whenever we left the house), a question mark, indicating our bemusement at his slow work-rate, a totally blank card (because he was never there) a mobile phone (which he seemed to be talking on whenever he did turn up) and the card saying "stress".

Score zero again. Still, what can one expect of a partner who does not even have the wit to think of a simple pun.

Competition winners

Scrabble Silver Jubilee Competition

The prize of Terence Nolder's evening dress - in Scrabble green with sequinned silver letters - has been won by Mrs R Wade of Norwich.

Hieroglyphics

For correctly deciphering our competition, the following win copies of TUT TUT, the Egyptian hieroglyphics games from the British Museum: Hugh Walding (Newport, Isle of Wight); D O'Connor, (Preston, Lancs); Jane Marsters (New Malden, Surrey).

New Year Competitions:

Next week, we shall begin to catch up with the answers and winners to our end-of-year chess, bridge, backgammon and True-or-False news items competitions which appeared in the 28 December edition.

Chess William Hartston

The best excitement at this year's Hastings was provided by the Challengers Tournament, which gives an opportunity for players to qualify for the invitation-only Premier tournament the following year. With 10 grandmasters, the field was almost as star-studded as that of the top tournament.

While the press were concentrating on the feats of 12-year-old Luke McShane, who so narrowly missed scoring his second norm towards a master title, the real thrills were in the battle for first place. First, James Plaskett romped into a clear lead, then he was beaten by Joe Gallagher, but in the last two rounds, Igor Rausis of Latvia beat both of them to sprint into first place. He and Plaskett secured qualification for next year's premier.

We gave one brilliant Plaskett win in Thursday's paper. Here's another one, equally spectacular and also ending in mate. After Black's 1...b6 and White's 2.b3, much of the game becomes a battle to prove which is the stronger bishop: the one of b7 or that on b2. White's 15.g4 is an attempt to open the g-file and bring his rook to help the bishop's efforts in an attack against g7, but the whole plan seemed too optimistic.

When 16.gxf5 was met by 16...d3! the bishop on b2 may have looked more

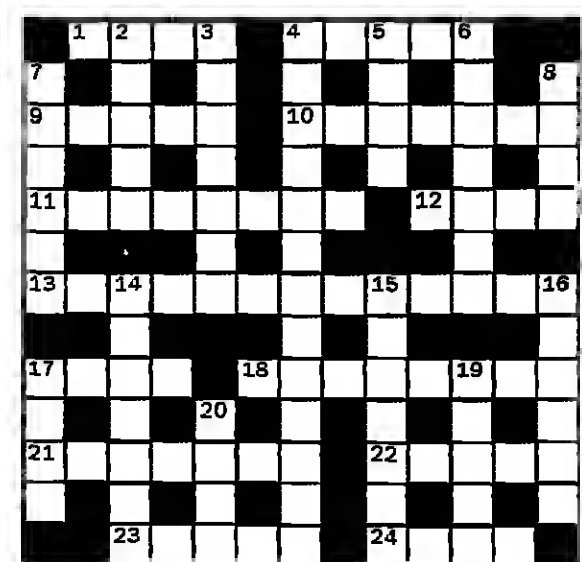
active than his colleague on b7 (particularly when Black had to avoid 17...dxe2? 18.Qxd6?) but the illusion was exposed in forceful style by Plaskett's 20...Rxf4! For the price of a rook, Black reopens his bishop's diagonal and gains two monster pawns on d3 and e3.

After this, White was always facing defeat. He avoided the trap of 29.Bg5 Qxg5! 30.Qxg5 Rch2 mate, but fell into a prettier version of the same thing on the following move. After 29...Kf8 Black threatened 30...Qd7, which on the previous move would have been met by Qe2+. White could have forced Black to rethink by playing 30.Bc6+ (when Kd8 loses to Bg5) but instead played the bishop to g5 immediately, letting Black polish the game off with a queen sacrifice.

White: Colin McNab
Black: James Plaskett
1 c4 b6 18 Bb5 Rd5
2 b3 Bb7 19 Qg4 Ra8
3 Bb2 e6 20 Kh1 Rxf4
4 Nf3 Nf6 21 exd4 Rxd4
5 e3 d5 22 Qh3 c3
6 Be2 Bb6 23 Bg4 Bxg2+
7 0-0 Nbd7 24 Qxg2 e4
8 d4 d4 25 Be6+ Kf8
9 Nbd2 Ne4 26 Bd5 e2
10 Nxe4 dxe4 27 Rg1 g6
11 Ne5 f5 28 Bc1 Rh4
12 Nxd7 Qd7 29 h3 Ke8
13 f4 Qe7 30 Bg5 Qxg5
14 Rf2 c5 31 Bc6+ Kf8
15 g4 cxd4 32 Qg5 Rh3+
16 gxf5 d3 33 Kg2 Rh2
17 Rg2 c5 checkmate

concise crossword

No.3193 Saturday 11 January



- ACROSS**
- Covetousness (4)
 - Runs with long strides (5)
 - Arranges (5)
 - Jury finding (7)
 - Gathering (8)
 - Break (4)
 - Pocket items (13)
 - Domesticated (4)
 - Accessible to only a few (8)
 - Composer (7)
 - Shrub (5)
 - Jargon (5)
 - Unhurried (4)
- DOWN**
- Tacks (5)
 - Muslim veil (7)
 - Road/rail intersection (5,8)
 - Wine (4)
 - Branch of knowledge (7)
 - Disconnect (6)
 - Desist (4)
 - Retribution (7)
 - Bare-headed (7)
 - Obtain (6)
 - Legal wrong (4)
 - Wild West show (5)
 - Passport endorsement (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
ACROSS: 1 Ballast, 2 Raids (Balustrades), 3 Actor, 9 Willow, 10 Spender, 11 Pasha, 12 Tringe, 14 Newark, 17 Major, 19 Unusual, 22 Lowdown, 23 Tenor, 24 Rules, 25 Turista, DOWN: 1 Brass, 2 Lottery, 3 Acriid, 4 Thwart, 5 Relapse, 6 Idols, 7 Seivark, 12 Tumblers, 13 Nervous, 15 Alumnus, 16 Punnet, 18 Jewel, 20 Uter, 21 Lords

The answers to the Christmas Jumbo Crossword will appear next week

Bridge Alan Hiron

Game all; dealer South

North
♠ A J 8 7
♥ A 7 4 3
♦ 10 7
♣ K 4 2

West
♠ K
♥ 10 6 5 2
♦ Q 6 5
♣ Q J 9 7 6

East
♠ 10 6 4 3
♥ Q 9
♦ A K 9 4 3
♣ 8 5

South
♠ Q 9 5 2
♥ K J 8
♦ J 8 2
♣ A 10 3

This was the deal that won the prize for the best played hand in the 1996 Lederer Memorial Trophy. It was an unusual brilliancy, for declarer started off on the wrong foot but found a sparkling recovery.

After two passes, North opened One Club, East overcalled with One Diamond and South (Zia Mahmood) bid one Spade. Both West and North supported their partners' suits and, after making a try for game

Perplexity

Perplexity returns this week with a new, extra-large set of the popular "26 L of the A" (Letters of the alphabet) alphanumeric puzzles. All you have to do is work out what the letters stand for in the following:

1 A N of H
2 F in a R G
3 B of P G T
4 F on a H (E T T)
5 O S
6 G a L

with Three Diamonds, Zia subsided when North could only bid Three Spades.

West led ♠5 and after winning with his king, East switched to ♠6. Declarer won in hand and slipped up when he led ♠Q to the king and ace. Next he took a successful finesse of ♠J and led a second trump. When West showed out, Zia muttered the Pakistani equivalent of "Tut, tut," and set out to recover.

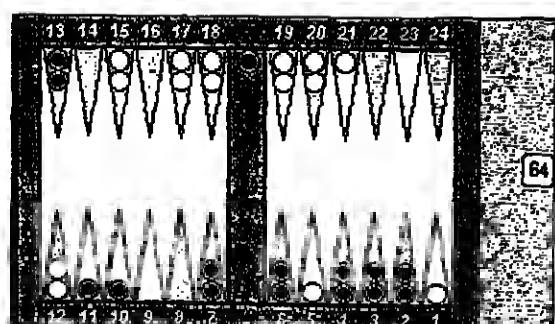
He put in the seven from table and, after winning with the ten, East led another club to dummy's king. It looked as though declarer would end up a trick short, but two more rounds of trumps left West in trouble. He had to keep all his hearts and the winning club so had to discard ♠6. Zia cashed ♠K, dropping East's queen, and ran ♠8 successfully.

Finally declarer got off lead with a club. West won and led ♠Q and now it was East's problem. If he overtook, South's ♠J would become a winner; if he left his partner on lead, the ♠A would be brought back to life.

7 P F P a B in S
8 R on a C B
9 T of D L S
10 T on Y F

When you have deciphered them, send your answers to: Perplexity, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, to reach us by 22 January. The first correct answer opened nn that date will win a copy of the new *Chambers 21st Century Dictionary*.

Backgammon Chris Bray



Last week we introduced the concept of Woolsey's Law of Doubling (roughly, "If in doubt, double"). Now let's look at a practical example. With a man on the bar you are on roll as Black in the above position. Should you double? Should White take or pass?

I was in the box with a partner when this position arose in a six-handed chouette at the Double Fives club (with six or more, it is common for the box to take a partner). We then discussed whether to double. Certainly this position is very volatile. By our next roll we could either have lost our market - reached a position where our opponents would immediately drop a double - or be in trouble ourselves. Consider, for example, the sequence 6,5 for Black followed by 6,5 for White, when it is White who will have lost their market.

In the start position nearly all numbers play well. 4s hit from the bar, 2s, 5s and 6s can be used to hit on the 5-point. 1s and 3s are not so good, but double 1 and double 3 both play well. If we hit one of White's men and they fail to enter we will definitely have lost our market. Now apply Woolsey's Law: if Black doubles should White take? Although we thought our opponents would take, White is going to lose a lot of gammons and that may just push the decision towards a drop. This meets Woolsey's key criterion: we're not totally sure it is a take - so we must double!

Double we did and White accepted the cube. We were rewarded for our aggression by rolling 4,4. This was played Bag/21*. 13/9/5*/1* putting three men on the bar. White stayed on the bar and we easily won a gammon. Later analysis using *Jellyfish* showed that with White owning the cube, Black wins only 51 per cent of the time but 70 per cent of those wins are gammons. This confirms the correct action in the initial position to be double/take.

THE INDEPENDENT LONG WEEKEND
TO FIND OUT WHY

Whatever happened to...

Acid rain?

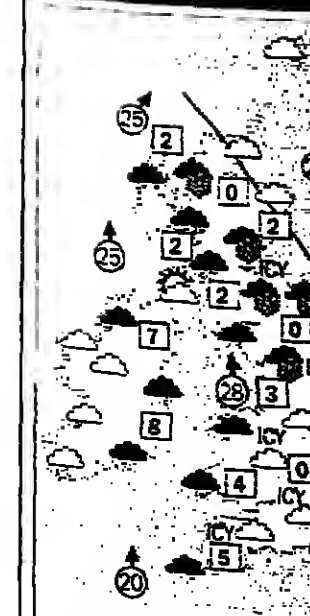


Serena Mackesy
In my week

Whizzing past the window at regular intervals are the legs of an impossibly slim woman dangling from a trapeze



Weather



Location	Time	Temp	Wind	Clouds
Aberdeen	4:15pm	26	26	26
Anglesey	4:25pm	26	26	26
Belfast	4:35pm	26	26	26
Birmingham	4:45pm	26	26	26
Blackpool	4:55pm	26	26	26
Bournemouth	5:05pm	26	26	26
Brighton	5:15pm	26	26	26
Bristol	5:25pm	26	26	26
Cardiff	5:35pm	26	26	26
Canterbury	5:45pm	26	26	26
Cardiff	5:55pm	26	26	26
Cardiff	6:05pm	26	26	26
Cardiff	6:15pm	26	26	26
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Cardiff	6:45pm	26	26	26
Cardiff	6:55pm	26	26	26
Cardiff	7:05pm	26	26	26
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Cardiff	5:15pm	26	26	26
Cardiff	5:25pm	26	26	26
Cardiff	5:35pm	26	26	26

Dancing in the dark



John Walsh meets ...Michael Flatley



'So tell me," I asked the world's fastest, richest and most egomaniacal dancer, "Can you waltz?"

"What?" said Michael Flatley.

"Or tango? Or rumba? Or salsa?"

It is rather a cheek to enquire if the most famous son of Terpsichore since Rudolf Nureyev can do things ordinary mortals do, especially those that involve bandleaders, three-four rhythm, taffeta and sequins. But, his reply was revealing. "I don't know if I can," he said. "Of course I can go out on the floor and have fun with the girls. But I don't imagine I'd be very good at most of those dances. I wouldn't say I'm very proficient. I rarely get up to dance anywhere but on stage. I'm sort of comfortable in my own little world."

Indeed he is. But then Mr Flatley's "little world" currently embraces Australia, the States, London and Dublin and nets him about \$1m a month. The stage world he inhabits is a show called *Lord of the Dance*, the one he went off and devised after his acrimonious split from Riverdance in October 1995. It's a music-and-dance extravaganza loosely based around Celtic mythology with some curious add-on effects deriving from Druidism, Greek-god attitudinising, biker chic and fascist iconography. It's with this vulgar but dynamic entertainment that Flatley has set about conquering the world. For a man who was unknown – and whose chosen art form had no popular audience – in 1994, he has, you could say, risen to the occasion.

Everyone knows the story of Riverdance – how a seven-minute burst of Irish step dancing in the 1994 Eurovision Song Contest, devised by an RTE producer called Moya Doherty and choreographed by Flatley, won instant and total acclaim among an audience of 300 million worldwide, gave Irish dancing an unprecedented global cachet, became the bestselling video of all time (selling two million copies) and made over £30m in two years. Everyone also knows how spectacularly the producer and her star fell out on the eve of Riverdance's return to London. *Lord of the Dance* is Flatley's revenge.

He and his 100-strong entourage are performing at Wembley this week, having just returned from touring Australia. How'd it go? "Oh, unbelievable," said Flatley. "They were dancing around and jumpin' around, screamin' and howlin'. We couldn't have anticipated anything like that – I never toured in Australia before. We did a quarter of a million tickets in 10 days. We were sold out more than two months before we arrived. They added two more shows in Newcastle, and they were both sold out in two hours. And

they're both 8,000-seaters." Flatley always has statistics to hand. A terrible man for the attendance figures, though it's a necessary part of his persona as dancing impresario, as arty businessman. And you gradually realise he has a whole wardrobe of personas which he adopts as the whim takes him. At different times in our conversation he tried on the slushy Arch-romantic, the Californian Mystic, the Sex God, the Dead-End Kid, the Blarney purveyor, the Bit of a Lad.

Here's the Arch-romantic: "Beaches, I love beaches. Every spare minute I have I go walking on an empty beach somewhere because I just love to think and dream and create. And the feel of the ocean and the fresh air – there's a great energy there. I feel very moved on a beach..." Skegness, it's so bracing.

Flatley especially liked the mile-wide beaches of the Oz coastline, where he worked on his winter tan. He's a startlingly handsome chap with a peach-skin fuzziness about the face (fluffy sideburns, designer stubble) and waves of streaked hair teased upwards in an aspirant rockabilly quiff. Flatley's black suit is dramatic sculpted to his compact 5ft 9in frame, his tie a tasteful red, his shirt a long-cuffed cotton, his cufflinks expensive little silver artworks – yet you pick up a feeling of unease about him, a rootlessness in his hurt blue eyes, a sense that he's a constructed thing rather than a real person.

It may be something to do with his detachment about his body: "I have to constantly separate myself and look at myself as a product. I can't just buy another violin if it breaks, you know? It doesn't work that way. I treat my legs very carefully." To this end he employs a lady called Derry Ann Morgan who specialises in "special rub-downs" before and after every show. "If I don't have the one after the show, my legs will be so sore getting out of bed in the morning, it'll take me a while even to stand up on them." Ms Morgan's manual therapies also include something called *raki* – "puttin' her hands over certain parts of me. She just puts good energy in and sucks any bad energy out." So it's a kind of mystical healing... "No, it's very commonplace. She's a gifted woman."

His new passion is the sensory-deprivation tank, the kind that was all the rage in California 15 years ago. Mr Flatley is ecstatic about its benefits. "It's fabulous. Complete darkness and not a sound. One time I went to sleep in there and my body was jumpin' the whole time [he mimes a convulsive twitch], but that was just all the bad energy and electricity being taken out of it... At the end of an hour is when I really start to go inside. It's when I get magnificent ideas. It's about focusing. Focus, focus, focus." These ideas you get (I said):

surely the essence of the tank is stillness, and the essence of what you do is movement. How can you pursue an idea of movement while you're lying, sense-deprived, like a floating corpse? Flatley looked hugely pleased, as if someone had mentioned a secret only he knew about. "Control," he said, "complete control, absolute control. Imagine the beauty of not being able to move, and forcing your mind to do it for you. You can't get

I get magnificent ideas in the sensory deprivation tank. It's all about focusing. Focus, focus, focus

up and try it, you have to continue thinking. It's brilliant. I dance like a king after it." The *Lord of the Dance* show features, among several displays of superhuman agility, a weird amount of militiaman strutting, of black-shirted uniforms, dictatorial paraphernalia, masks and what might be jackboots. What was it doing in a Celtic dream-world? Flatley frowned. "You have to realise the show is fiction. It's not any particular myth or legend. It's just the best way I could interpret good versus evil. Our dancing is very precise but I don't think it's military in any way. Just very masculine..."

There's at least one moment of real magic. As Flatley does one of his complex Irish-flamenco-tap routines, he glances over his shoulder and, grinning down at the ground-level blur of movement, he wags his fingers at his heels. Suddenly you see him, not as a dancer, but as a man dangerously set upon by a pack of snapping terriers. In other

words, the man and his feet have become separate entities, a form of dualism Descartes would find intriguing. Was he conscious of his brain telling his feet what to do?

He leant forward. "That is exactly what I'm trying to tell the audience – that my mind is controlling my feet at all times. I'm telling them that I'm thinking while I'm there. I'm focusing while I'm there. I'm not just on cruise control. This is the real thing. And they

know that no one else in the world can do that." As we sit in the Laoshorrough Hotel, discussing Mr Flatley's wonderfulness, his uniqueness, his focus and control, his energy and artistry, a saying from his father's native Sligo occurs to me: "If conceit was consumption, ye'd be dead long ago." He upsets lots of people. The *Daily Telegraph* called *Lord of the Dance* "a display of conceit so shameless as to be risible". Other commentators go on about the "O'Chippendales" side of his work, his "smash and grab" approach to Irish culture. They have a point. The trouble is, Flatley is unique. He has spent the bulk of his life doing something nobody else can do.

His father Michael was a building contractor who emigrated to Chicago in 1947 with his Carlown-born wife, Eilish. Michael junior was 11 when, on an Irish holiday, his mother took him to a step dancing class back in Co Carlow. His grandmother had been Leinster dance champion; it was in

the genes; it became his life. Back in Chicago, he practised. He remembers creating dance patterns in the dark: "I used to go into the rooms in the basement, turn off all the lights so my ear would be absolute, so I wouldn't be influenced by what I saw. I still do. That's where I get these rhythm patterns you won't hear anywhere else in the world." He became the first American holder of the World Irish Dancing Championships in 1975 when he was 17. It occurred to me that, among the jocks, dudes and greasies of the average Chicago school, a dancer with an Irish accent must have stuck out like a dolmen. "No, I fitted in with everybody. I was a dancer but I didn't go around talking about it. I was a boxer but I didn't talk about that. I played ice hockey, I played football with the lads. We did what everyone did."

Why did he take up boxing? "We lived in a rough neighbourhood. It was on the south side of the city, 79th and Ashland Avenue, the Little Flower parish" – after the Catholic icon, St Therese of Lisieux: Flatley smiles at the inaptness of the name – "and I hadda walk a mile to school. I'd cross paths with people comin' from the other side of the avenue, and I'd have fist fights nearly every day. I was a skinny little fellow. One day I came home and my father said, 'That's enough bloody noses.' He took my brother and me to the gym – at the time we were probably the only white fella there – and we learned to handle ourselves. And they started to realise they could pick on other people, but let the two Irish guys go because it's gonna be just too difficult..."

Flatley had a period of labouring jobs ("Whenever I think I'm getting big-headed, I remember where it all came from – the days when they passed me the freezing cold shovel. I get back to it all the time") before becoming a

dancer full-time. Those unfamiliar with Celtic dance should know that, in its pure state, it's a formal and inexpressive business: hands straight down by the sides, head stiff, no body movements above the waist – the total effect is of someone in a strait-jacket hopping over burning coals. Then Flatley danced with The Chieftains. Paddy Moloney's purist Irish folk group, and began to change the rules. "As I did more and more venues, I started to use my arms, to use my body and be more expressive. I couldn't use my arms like a tap dancer, flappin' them around, or like a ballet dancer, that would be too soft, nor like a flamenco dancer, although what I'm doin' is closest to flamenco, because they're Celts as well. I had to find a completely new way of doin' it, less formal but strong and powerful and confident. And the further out I went, the more the crowd came with me. The more things I put in [he snaps his fingers, like a Fifties beatnik] the more they'd be screamin' and yellin'..."

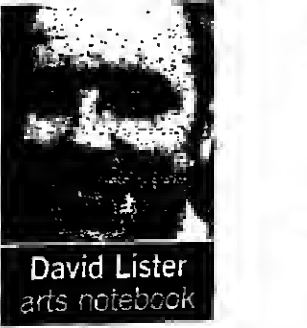
So the only professional

Irish dancer in the world, the rule-breaker with the 28-taps-a-second feet, went on the road. Wasn't it, I asked, a little like speaking a language nobody else knows? Flatley mused. "I've had such a strange life. I've never had to audition for anything. People have always called me and asked me to do things. I've been everywhere, the Hollywood Bowl, the Kennedy Centre in DC, Carnegie Hall. I've danced in front of presidents, the National Endowment for the Arts" – and, modestly might forbid him adding, he was pronounced a "Living Treasure" by the National Geographic Society...

Along the way his stage presentation underwent another change. "It just happened one night, completely by coincidence. You know how it is, you're on tour, leading a hachelor existence. One night my clothes were a disaster, my shirt was wrinkled and under the hed somewhere. So I went on stage without a shirt, just a jacket. The audience went nuts. And I thought: why didn't I think of this before?" Now he's off to wow America, from New York ("Every solo I've ever devised for myself since I was a child was built for Radio City Music Hall") to his native Chicago and the former residents of Little Flower parish. Why was he doing it? "My whole life has been to get this far and to do this. I've made enough money now, more than I can spend. What's important is that I'm putting myself into my art. People pay a lot of money to come and see me. I didn't come here to be second best."

Michael, you point out, you're pushing 39. Shouldn't you be settling into something more slow and expressive? The Canesian hoover, with his violent leanings, his fondness for the dark and his casual assumption of artistic genius, regarded me steadily. "I'm not the type of performer who gets to a scale like this and then fades into the sunset. I don't think any great artist thinks, 'I'll just sing at half-power tonight, nobody'll notice.' It's going to be like this and then – click! – one day it'll be over. It can't be any other way. I can't dance at 50 per cent. I have only one speed."

Can the popular song embrace more of life's experiences than falling in and out of love and the purchase of blue suede shoes and other accessories? When I discussed this once with Roger Daltrey of The Who he said he had hoped for a long time that rock and pop would deal with middle-aged angst just as it dealt with teenage angst. Indeed, he had thought that his old sparring partner Pete Townshend might be the very man to compose such lyrics, but it hadn't happened. Another part of life seldom put to music is the joy or otherwise of bringing up children.



mainstream music radio would be a good start. Gina is a strange animal in jazz circles as she sings not about the usual jazz themes of dives, drugs, dead horn players, lost love or, if the tempo is upbeat, found love. Instead, many of her numbers are about motherhood, rare enough in pop and middle-of-the-road, and a radical departure for piano, tenor sax and bass. One of the numbers she sang at a New Year gig I attended was called "Granny O'Granny Please Comb My Hair". With words by the

poet Grace Nichols it dealt with a little girl's delight in having her grandmother tend to her coiffure. It's a brave move to domesticate the jazz idiom, and it leads to the larger question of why children feature so little in music generally. They are welcomed as babies (David Bowie's "Kooks" for his son, *Sterling Wonder* for his daughter) but once past the nappy stage, are never sung of again. Why?

I appeared this week on a radio programme (I know, one can't appear on radio, but what is the correct word?) about the arts and the national lottery. BBC Radio 4's *Agenda* programme had Richard Eyre of the National Theatre and Stephen Daldry of the Royal Court continuing to warn of the potential iniquity of lottery money being used to fund a revenue spending in the arts rather than just

for buildings as was the original intention. And I felt rather like the chap in the Bateman cartoon in advocating that this should happen in some regulated way. In fact, of course, it is happening already. The new Arts Council initiative, Arts For Everyone will give lottery money for the commissioning of new writing for the theatre and there is every likelihood that some of this new writing will end up on the stage of the Royal Court and quite possibly the National.

It should not be beyond the wit of government, the Arts Council and leading arts practitioners to earmark other areas where lottery money can be used in what have traditionally been revenue funded parts of the arts. As for breaking the apparently sacred principle of additivity (by which lottery money should not be a substitute for annual Treasury grant), it should

also not be beyond the wit of those responsible to draw up legislation saying that lottery money should never fund more than a certain percentage of arts spending.

David Bowie's 50th birthday was marked by the BBC by an interview with the singer. It was plugged as being particularly "candid." In fact it contained virtually nothing new, and much of it was taken up with clips of interviews gone by. There was one moment though when Bowie was about to be candid. He mentioned, unprompted and most unusually for him in a live interview, the troubles in his own family. He has never spoken on TV before about his late brother's schizophrenia. But the interviewer, the *Illustrations* and exalted Alan Yentah no less, did not pursue it at all. There are times when one wants to strangle the television.

Picasso by Eurostar.

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IDENT LONG WEEKEND

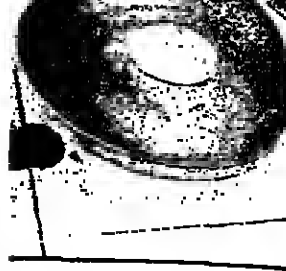
lorer's pastimes.

is at the Chelsea Arts Club's another one: "There was a girl from Ceylon who d herself up in the when they knocked down the she was flat on the floor, and found she'd not been hurt gone."

ward Lear's not terribly he doesn't bother much first and last lines. It's better some internal rhyming. it's a minor art form. This my favourite: "There was a g man from Bengal who wancy dress hall he thought d risk it and go as a it but a dog ate him up in the Not one of mine, but I've ys liked it. I can see it all ening, can't you? I'm afraid become a bit of a linerick. You know, rattle them off don't let the other man get merick in."

use of failed inspiration "The turn Book of Limericks" (John O'Parra) is available from good bookshops for £8.99

se it
overs



stretches to the right, mouse, as a matter of fact. The budget album is based on a standard in current "chord" style.

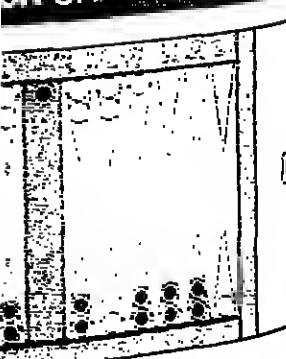
Bawn O'Beirne-Ranelagh



the new film, back to the future. The price is £19.99. The film is available on video. The film is available on video. The film is available on video.

by William Hartston

on Chris Bray

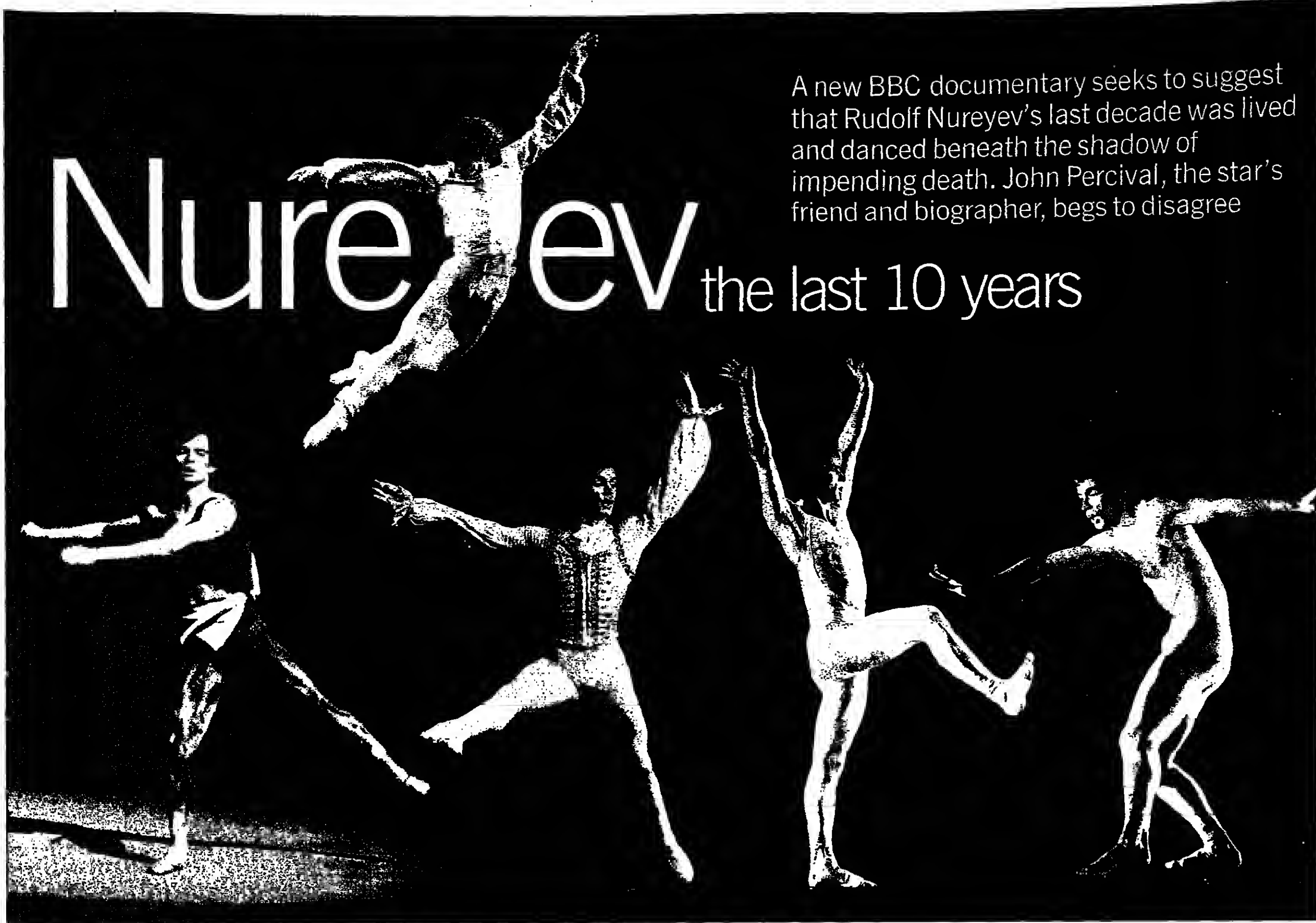


the new film, back to the future. The price is £19.99. The film is available on video. The film is available on video. The film is available on video.

of artistic angst

arts & books

Alberto Manguel: Evita knew my mum; Høeg's lack of feeling for Brits...6 Winterson's tragedy and Kennedy's triumph7



A new BBC documentary seeks to suggest that Rudolf Nureyev's last decade was lived and danced beneath the shadow of impending death. John Percival, the star's friend and biographer, begs to disagree

De mortuis – well, it used to be nothing but good that should be spoken of the dead, but now the idea seems to be that dishing the dirt is what matters. This is not just a question of the way newspaper obituaries have become more frank and honest over recent years – that is cause for gratitude – but elsewhere the trend has gone too far. And I am not the only person who will be bopping mad about the *Omnibus* programme marking the fourth anniversary of Rudolf Nureyev's death, to be shown by BBC1 on Tuesday.

What an opportunity lost! Granted, this programme does not parade supposed facts which are simply untrue: in that respect, it is unlike two biographies of Nureyev (one English, one American) that were rushed out once he could no longer sue. But the documentary, covering the last 10 years of his life, is both incomplete and heavily slanted, its bias indicated by the title: "Dancing through Darkness". At least two of Nureyev's closest friends, the American Wallace Potts and the French Druce François, withdrew their co-operation from the programme-makers during filming because, Potts told me, "their approach was misleading – they had said it was about his professional life, but it became clear that they wanted to concentrate on his illness." Other witnesses who did take part, such as Nureyev's colleague Patricia Ruanne, can be seen on camera gritting their teeth against questions they find inappropriate. And some dancers are shown only in brief snippets although they actually recorded far more; did their comments not fit the chosen line?

People with much less knowledge of Nureyev, however, are allowed to pontificate about his thoughts and motives. Among these I am inclined to place the American agent, Andrew Grossman,

who took over from Nureyev's long-term adviser, Sandor Gortinsky. Grossman reveals a somewhat shaky grasp of what Nureyev actually achieved during his time in Paris, and his surprise at his client's reluctance to sign a contract for *The King and I* is revealing. Maybe he did not realise that what Nureyev really wanted at that point was a renewal of his Paris contract on acceptable terms.

"He made a million dollars" from *The King and I*, Grossman claims. Nureyev liked to make money, but after 1975 it all went to the Foundation he had set up. Some was invested in the paintings and antique furniture that filled his various homes, but when his dearest friend Maude Gosling expressed worries about his extravagance, he begged her "Don't stop me, because I love to have them around me. When I'm gone, they can all be sold." The proceeds, after providing for his relatives, were to benefit dance, and especially young dancers; and indeed several scholarships have already been awarded.

The starting (and finishing) point of the BBC programme is Nureyev's last big production: an opulent version of the classic *La Bayadère*, premiered at the Paris Opéra on 8 October 1992. Nureyev had not long recovered from painful kidney stones, then struggled against a heavy respiratory infection to stage the three-act work in just three weeks. The film shows him taking a rehearsal, hardly able to talk but his eyes not missing a point, conveying his corrections by gestures and through an assistant.

No wonder that, by opening night, he was worn out and had to watch the performance from a couch in a stage-hox. Cameras focus on his gaunt face as he is helped on stage to acknowledge an ovation. This is a sad sight, and the implication we are left with is that afterwards he just curled up in a corner and waited to die.

Actually, no, he didn't. At the dinner after the premiere, he talked to Maude Gosling about his plans for choreographing Hans Werner Henze's *Onegin*. When I visited him two days later in his apartment on the Quai Voltaire, he was delighted that he had persuaded his doctor, Michel Canesi, to certify him fit to fly the next day to the Caribbean island of Saint-Barthélemy, where he had a house. "I'll never shake this off in all the cold and damp here in Paris," he told me, "but in the sun I'll soon be better." That evening he went off to the Opéra-Comique to watch Roland Petit's *Marseilles Ballet* and afterwards to discuss plans for conducting some performances of Petit's *Coppélia*. And when his dancer friends Charles Jude and Florence Clerc accompanied him to Saint-Barth's, Nureyev started working out movements on Jude for a future production of Britten's *The Prince of the Pagodas*.

All his life Nureyev had been used to overcoming illness and injury. Rather than lose his role in a new ballet by Frederick Ashton, he struggled into Covent Garden with a temperature of 102 for the premiere of *Jazz Calendar* (Royal Ballet dancers punningly nicknamed him Randolph Neveroff.) When an injury during Act 1 of *La Sylphide* once forced him to allow a replacement to go on in Act 2, he still got on stage somehow for the evening's last ballet, *The Lesson*, where he could adjust the steps to save the hurt leg, and his acting could cover any shortcomings in technique. And after one performance, I remember watching him remove yards of elastic bandage worn for support like a puttee round one ankle under his tights.

So when Dr Canesi diagnosed him as HIV-positive in 1984, this did not make him change his professional way of life. The film's implication that he began rushing to cram everything in is a misread-

ing; he had always rushed, all his life wanted to do more than there was time for, simply because he had so many ambitions and interests. Besides, as Canesi says, at that time the expectation was that Aids would kill only one in 10; the grimmer, longer-term truth became apparent only gradually. And Nureyev acted as if he would beat this illness like the others.

The 10 years covered by the programme were a period of astonishing achievement. Nureyev's transformation of the Paris Opéra Ballet is described by the ballet master Patrice Bart, but it could surely have been made clearer to a non-specialist audience just how he changed the dancers' approach, allowed young talent its head, and widened their range with a whole new repertoire. From historical re-creations to new commissions, from classic revivals to the most extreme modernists, from his own productions to a steady stream of visiting choreographers, they tackled everything and did it well.

I cannot think of anyone else who has achieved so much on taking over an established company. What Nureyev did at the Paris Opéra would have been a full-time job for anyone else, but (while keeping in touch via daily phone calls whenever he was absent) he combined it with guest appearances and productions, world tours, and launching a further career as a conductor.

That was not just a whim but a way of continuing to perform when he could no longer dance, and also of enriching his love of music. Herbert von Karajan had advised him to do it and even said "I'll teach you". Nureyev studied conducting seriously in Vienna and California, directed concerts, and conducted an American Ballet Theatre gala of the Prokofiev *Romeo and Juliet*. A fascinating development for a dancer – but one that is not shown at all in this programme, and gets only a throwaway

mention: "He conducted and choreographed and continued to dance."

How good it would have been to see some of this, as well as more detail about what happened in Paris, instead of the interminably repeated pictures of dancers walking through corridors, interspersed with the most hackneyed and irrelevant background shots of motor traffic and trains, people smoking or sitting in cafés, even that wonderful old cliché, the Eiffel Tower. Add lots of slow motion and soft focus, with a melancholy soundtrack specially composed by Alexander Balanescu, and you have what often looks more like a travel commercial than an arts documentary.

The programme's makers might have probed further into why, after such a triumph as ballet director, Nureyev's contract was not renewed. Jack Lang, the former Arts Minister who originally appointed him to the job, claims not to know why Nureyev was edged out, but mutters darkly about "personal problems" and his health. Nobody breathes the name Pierre Bergé (head of Yves Saint-Laurent) who had been put in charge of both the Paris opera houses and whose main achievement there was to have sacked not only Nureyev but the musical director Daniel Barenboim in favour of replacements neither of whom lasted long.

Still, Nureyev (as so often in life) actually has the last laugh in this programme. Forget the baleful comments; ignore the lugubrious background music. Just look at Nureyev's face. In almost every shot, he is either smiling or laughing outright. And this is the man under imminent threat, the man "dancing through darkness"? Or is it the man I remember, who loved life and enjoyed it to the full? Decide for yourself.

Omnibus 10.45pm Tuesday, BBC1

To bop or not to bop

It may not be in an idiom Ronnie Scott would recognise, but the future of British jazz has never sounded better. By Phil Johnson

Standing at the bar, smoking a cigarette, staring into space... Whether the venue was a hotel in Havana during the jazz festival he and his partner Pete King helped to organise there; in clubs, pubs and concert halls throughout Britain on tours with his quintet, or, most famously, at his own club in Soho, the late Ronnie Scott did a lot of staring into space. Caught in repose, his hawk-like profile wreathed in clouds of smoke, the contemplative moment provided by a fog break seemed to extend into a chain of tobacco, into infinity.

It's tempting, however fanciful, to imagine that the space Scott was staring into was also something to do with the future of jazz, and his own place in it. A terrific tenor saxophonist in his prime, whose Jazz Couriers group with Tubby Hayes (who died in 1973) was the highlight of British bop in the late Fifties, Scott nevertheless suffered from insecurity about the value of his playing, often refusing offers to sit in with the American stars he had booked to play at his club, who admired him unservicably. Even the tetchy Charles Mingus gave praise: "Of all the white boys, Ronnie Scott gets closer to the negro

blues feeling," he said in 1961. This, of course, was part of the problem. Jazz musicians of Scott's generation dedicated themselves to an idiom whose cultural roots lay largely in another continent and another racial identity, and they tended to measure their own art accordingly, becoming hypersensitive about their imagined shortcomings.

Although there has been a vital European jazz tradition since the 1920s and Django Reinhardt, it's only comparatively recently that it has seemed to offer British musicians a credible alternative to aspire to. At present, European jazz has never been stronger, with British artists the strongest of all if we accept the measurement offered by the annual Danish Jazzpar Prize (a cash reward of \$34,000, and an overall budget of \$250,000 for performances, broadcasts and recordings). This year's winner is Django Bates from Beckenham, the pianist, composer and bandleader (of Loose Tubes and Delightful Precipice). Three years ago, the winner was Canterbury's Tony Coe, the saxophonist and clarinettist, and these two represent the only non-Americans to have won the award – the nearest jazz gets to a Nobel – since it was established

eight years ago. Significantly, both Bates and Coe abjure the bop tradition in favour of an eclecticism that draws from earlier and later forms of jazz, as well as from classical and folk music. For young British jazz musicians today, the range of influences has never been broader, though what for Scott would have been the great tradition – the lineage of bop from Charlie Parker to the Marsalis brothers – can be a burden as much as an inspiration.

For the saxophonist Julian Argüelles – whose *Scapes* album of last year was one of the most striking, and strikingly different, of all British jazz albums – the bop tradition is a perplexing inheritance. "I don't know how I deal with it," he says. "I go through phases. Sometimes I feel really happy playing saxophone and then sometimes I find it quite frustrating or even depressing, especially because there is a real tradition with the sax, a tradition I came up through, of John Coltrane and Sonny Rollins. It really is hard to not sound like that; it's in the nature of the instrument to sound very, very, jazzy. I listen to Coltrane and Rollins and just think that that's what the instrument does best."

Argüelles finds alternative models in

classical and folk music, but recognises the importance of a European jazz tradition too, citing the examples of the Norwegian Jan ("Officium") Garbrek, the British John Surman and the Brazilians Hermeto Pascoal and Egberto Gismonti.

At 23, the pianist Nikki Yeoh is perhaps the most exciting British jazz musician of her generation. Yet to make a record, she came to prominence after sitting in on a jam session at the Jazz Café as an amateur, where she impressed Courtney Pine sufficiently for him to pick her for his band there and then. She has since toured with Neneh Cherry, formed her own trio, Infinitum, begun a series of solo performances and written for the contemporary classical keyboard sextet Piano Circus, who programmed her piece alongside works by John Cage. "I don't see myself as fitting in with either the European or American traditions," she says. "There isn't so much pressure these days to fit in with any category. People are starting to get their influences from all sorts of different places."

Yeoh does, however, recognise national differences in the way jazz is passed on from one generation to the next. "In the US, there's a tradition of bandleaders as teachers. With someone

like Dizzy Gillespie, or Wynton Marsalis now, they wouldn't just get you out of bed and say, 'Right, G flat minor, ninth chord.' They'd explain how it works, and pass their knowledge on to members of the band. That sort of thing isn't woven into the fabric of the cloth here."

Yeoh is currently working on a commission for this year's Bath Festival which involves harmonising the sound of the spoken word from readings in different languages of one of her own poems, for a composition for 14 musicians and a video projection.

Video projections? Compositions for six pianos? John Cage? You can almost see Ronnie Scott shaking his head with disdain and reaching for the packet of fags. He would, however, surely love Yeoh's improvisation on Coltrane's "Giant Steps", and thrill to Argüelles' tender reading of "Too Young to Go Steady", the corny standard Coltrane transfigured into rare art. Staring into space, perhaps the future of British jazz wouldn't look too glum, even to Ronnie?

Julian Argüelles Quartet 8pm today, Julian / Steve Argüelles Duo 3pm tomorrow, at Blackheath Concert Halls, 23 Lee Rd, London SE3 (0181-463 0100)

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Whatever happened to...

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Weather

City	Temp	Wind	Clouds	Lightning
Aberdeen	10	10	10	10
Angelsley	10	10	10	10
Avon	10	10	10	10
Belfast	10	10	10	10
Birmingham	10	10	10	10
Blackpool	10	10	10	10
Bournemouth	10	10	10	10
Brighton	10	10	10	10
Bristol	10	10	10	10
Cardiff	10	10	10	10
Carlisle	10	10	10	10
Dover	10	10	10	10
Dublin	10	10	10	10
Edinburgh	10	10	10	10
Exeter	10	10	10	10
Glasgow	10	10	10	10
Inverness	10	10	10	10

Today
London 4.15pm to 8.02am
Bristol 4.25pm to 8.13am
Birmingham 4.18pm to 8.20am
Manchester 4.14pm to 8.20am
Newcastle 4.03pm to 8.25am
Glasgow 4.09pm to 8.41am
Belfast 4.23pm to 8.40am

سكان الامل

Have you heard the latest 'Knock! Knock!' joke?



Tinselly sounds and festive fun with the Bournemouth SO. By Ian Pillow

Christmas came to the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra suddenly, without warning, as it always does. We'd long forgotten about those dreadful motorised nodding gnomes in the shopping precinct opposite the Poole Arts Centre - they seemed to have been there since September. There we were, having groaned our way through yet another Brahms symphony with Herbert Von Mogadon in the morning, and were taking our places after lunch expecting much of the same, when suddenly we heard a familiar voice (we hadn't bothered to look up at the conductor's rostrum). "Good afternoon, everyone." "Good afternoon, Ron," came back the feeble response from a band faced by Mogadon's endless soliloquies about the meaning of an F sharp. In true panto fashion, the conductor tried again. "Good afternoon, everyone." We suddenly found our party hats. "Good afternoon, Ron!" - this time fortissimo. Ron Goodwin was here. At a stroke, it was Christmas.

As further evidence of this there was a memo on my chair from the management. Was I going to present my pre-concert talk, "The use of sonata-rondo form in *Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer* and its implications on modern society", as advertised? This was from a new member of staff who had failed to appreciate her predecessor's sense of humour.

There is something reassuring about the Ron Goodwin Christmas Show. The music is the same year in year out, but coming face to face

with *Little Donkey* after 11 months on the battlefield in hand-to-hand mortal combat with the great classics is as comforting as one's fireside arm chair. Anyway, the jokes are different from last year (they come from the year before) and there is always a novelty item.

This year it was a spectacular arrangement of *O Little Town of Bethlehem*. As the whole programme is decorated with tinselly, tinkly festive sounds, we have one of those fiendishly clever electronic keyboard things which at the press of a button reproduces - with uncanny accuracy - a vague, approximate impression of a harpsichord, a piano, or an ice-cream van (I'm told it's meant to be a celeste). It can also transpose into any key. If you can't be bothered with all those black notes, just stick to the white ones and the micro chip will do the rest. That is, if it's in a good mood - it has a habit of throwing an artistic wobble for no apparent reason. Ever since the poor keyboard player once unwittingly detonated "Cosmic Explosion" during *Silent Night*, we've always waited with bated breath.

For *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, it was supposed to be a harpsichord (for the old world touch), twanging away on top of a triangle (for the festive touch), a harp (for the angelic touch) and earth-shattering kit drums and thumping, pounding electric guitars (for the devotional touch). Having thus set the scene, the rest of the orchestra launched forth with the tune, all in a merry F major. Except for the harpsichord. Even though the wretched

player was hammering away in state-of-the-art F major, the synthesiser had decided unilaterally to transpose up a semi-tone into F sharp - and there was nothing anyone could do about it. *O Little Town of Bethlehem* thus emerged in what sounded like a newly discovered arrangement by Stockhausen.

If our favourite Christmas event is the Ron Goodwin Show, coming a close second is the "Seasonal Concert with Carols" that we do in Quirens and Places where they don't want the Ron Goodwin Show. Its success hinges on the Guest Presenter. This character is usually found by our management sticking a pin in the *Radio Times* and coming up with some nerd off *Blue Peter* or Saturday kids' TV. The best ones are those who have to narrate *Peter and the Wolf* or some such thing, can't read a note of music and don't know a double-bass from a dustbin lid.

This was a vintage year. To add to the fun, not only could the presenter not read a note of music, but the conductor was from East Europe and didn't understand a word of what the presenter was saying anyway.

Even though Santa was kind to me this year, the first rehearsal of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (special commission) remains the highlight of my Christmas. The presenter looked nervous. "Don't worry," said the conductor. "Just say, ven I do zis," pointing a finger.

"Once upon a time..." (our presenter was Irish) "Goldilocks was walkin' through a wood on a foim sommer's day..." Skippy, whistly

music on flute; the conductor pointed... "when she came to a little cott..."

"Stop! No! Zai was fur ze first wioleence. Start again."

"Once upon a toim Goldilocks was walkin' through a wood on a foim sommer's day..." Skippy, whistly music on flute, then a sexy, slinky tune on the first violins... "when she came to a little cottage. 'Oiwonder if anyone's in'..." In an inspirational burst of improvised method-acting that would have been the talk of any drama academy, the presenter here beat his fist upon the air, pretending to knock upon the door. This was followed by the sound of the vibraphone imitating a doorbell.

"Is there nobody in? O'll troy again." (Didn't I tell you? The script is up for the TS Eliot Prize.) Failing to appreciate the composer's inspirational masterstroke with the vibraphone, the presenter pounded the air with his fist again.

"No!" interrupted our frustrated conductor. "You press ze finker in ze eer - two - and ve make ze dink-dunk." Satisfied that he had thus clarified the situation, he then said, "Ve do again."

"Is there nobody in? O'll troy again," and with touching obsequious obedience the presenter put a finger in each ear, as instructed, presumably expecting the vibraphone to activate some special detuning device. Just as well he misunderstood really. Had he really put two fingers in the air in what was supposed to be a "family show"? It would have been a black day for orchestra-audience relations.

An element of surprise

Chopin Recitals. By Adrian Jack

Louis Lortie devoted part two of his Chopin recital at the Wigmore Hall last Friday to the 24 Preludes - not so frequently played as you would expect for such popular pieces. Lortie is certainly a strong pianist, and played the rippling left hand of No 3 with a boldness hardly warranted by the piano, *leggero* marking. But the outer sections of the "Raindrop" Prelude were delicate and really quiet, and stilled the audience like a spell. Despite performances that were never less than technically commanding and expressively purposeful, however, the response to most of the programme seemed underwhelming. Some spark was missing, as if Lortie knew too well how he would shape the music.

Ten years after he first made such a strong impression in this country, Lortie has not failed to live up to it, but he hasn't really surprised us either. With more than 20 discs to his credit, including the complete piano works of Ravel and sonatas of Beethoven, he's been cast in the role of cando-all, another cycle-slogger. That may be commercially rewarding, but it doesn't necessarily make for the most interesting artistic results.

The qualities of Andrew Wilde - not to be confused with his British senior David Wilde, still less with the veteran American Earl Wilde - have been compared to those of Myra Hess and Solomon. His OEH recital on Wednesday made apparent why. He chose a Chopin programme of almost overwhelming richness - the *Fantasy*, *Boracelle* and Sonatas Nos 2 and 3. He dashed on and off the platform in a hectic kind of way, starting each work

almost before he was seated. There was an exciting freshness, even a sense of danger in his playing, but nothing unconsidered. The *Fantasy* was paced like an epic journey, from the long preparatory section, through the lyrical effluence and contrasting repose in the distant central slow section, to a thrilling surge of emotion at the end. The *Boracelle* showed an exquisite sense of rhythmic style, the swaying motion nudged just enough to send the piece floating. Most remarkable of all, perhaps, were Wilde's passion and intelligence - and courage - in the treacherous Second Sonata. His boldness in dramatising the exploratory opening of the development in the first movement was highly original and effective, and his easy melodic grace in the long tune at the heart of the Funeral March made you wonder why most pianists sound so stiff and boring at this point. An inspired, and inspiring, performance, rising fully to all the great moments.

After which, there was hardly room for admiration to increase. But the Third Sonata was splendid, too - forthright and clear, even though Wilde pedalled the stormier passages generously. He took nothing for granted, and really played the piano like an orchestra, thinning out his tone deliberately in the slow movement, rather as string-players might cut down on vibrato. For once, I actually wanted more encores, just to hear what he would do with them. We got two Waltzes: in C sharp minor, Op 64 No 2, delicately coloured and affectionate; and in A flat, Op 34 No 1, in all its brilliant splendour. You can hear Wilde again, at the Wigmore Hall, in March.

A plague on both your houses

Paul Taylor urges zero tolerance for the bleeding-heart compassion and moralising Manhattan Marxism of Wallace Shawn's 'The Fever'

In Wallace Shawn's one-person play, *The Fever*, Clare Coulter talks of finding herself drawn towards a beautiful beggar in a poor country. There's money in her purse; she could give the beggar some of it. "And a voice says, 'Why not all of it? Why not give her all that you have?'" One argument against giving the beggar all that you have - in the literal Christian sense of "all" - is that you would simply be swapping places with this person. For the sake of a few minutes' relief from middle-class liberal guilt, you would be putting the beggar in the same morally dubious position with regard to poverty that you had formerly occupied. And, from one perspective at least, the net improvement in the world would be nil.

Shawn's play - a monologue delivered by a privileged traveller in a smart hotel in a Third World dictatorship - poses as a questioning of all the intellectual presuppositions that enable cosseted Western culturalists to carry on cossetting themselves: that high art and beauty have a trickle-

down, humanising effect; that it's political gradualism, rather than bloody revolution, which will improve the lot of the poor, etc, etc.

The monologue takes us on a spiralling, hallucinatory plunge into a kind of nervous breakdown, though, as this nervous breakdown seems to have been triggered more by what the speaker has seen of the world's wickedness than by personal problems, the degree (if any) to which it is supposed to represent an unbalanced view of reality is left unclear. The production opens at the Royal Court in a week that has exposed afresh the difficulties of taking humane, honourable and effective measures with regard to the destitute and homeless. Zero-tolerance policies or bleeding-heart compassion? Either way, the danger is that the focus of concern will not be on the poor but on the sensitivities of the "haves".

Performed with mesmeric skill by Ms Coulter - whose rapid, driven delivery, rubbery, determined mouth, and

mocking, self-loathing inflections, beautifully bring out the text's disturbing zeal - *The Fever* thinks it has the measure of the intractable contradictions in the guilt-ridden liberal stance. But it is riddled with unexamined contradictions of its own and presumptuous assumptions that make you recoil from its garrulous Manhattan Marxism.

I am not, God knows, a religious person but, next to the media appearances of Richard Dawkins, I can't think of anything more likely to make me one than the glib, imprisoning materialism of the outlook on display here. Referring to the chambermaid in the Third World hotel, the speaker offers a savage parody of the Westerners' unspoken attitude towards her - "[she] is repulsive, ignorant - it's not inappropriate that she should live in hell, because to you she really seems like a creature from hell". But the idea that this girl is in "hell" because she is very poor is just the equally impertinent flipside to the old Romantic view that fetishised the supposed simplicity and

wisdom of the destitute and outcast. And if the chambermaid's life is "hell", how would you describe the life of the people on the torture tables to which frequent allusion is made? It is, in any case, typical of the simplistic way *The Fever* divides up the world that you might suppose the poor have the monopoly on being tortured.

Full of lurid imaginings, Shawn's play is vitiated by a failure of imagination. Guilt at her privileged way of life seems to have resulted in the speaker virtually regarding such privilege as the necessary condition of happiness. Irritation at the way she can't escape from referring everything back to herself has produced in her an intermittently reductive response to any art that portrays the feelings of an individual with the disqualification of a moderate income upwards. There were knowing, complacent sniggers from the audience when she wondered why she had ever found *The Cherry Orchard* moving. Chekhov's heroine may have lost her estate, but she's going to an apartment

in Paris, so save your sympathy. By that criterion, Oedipus can go stuff himself, because he lives in a palace.

There's an overarching paradox in the piece. "Artists who create works of art that inspire sympathy and good values do not change the lives of the poor." So why then was *The Fever* written in such a way that (as a note from Shawn indicates) it can "be performed in anyone's flat or home"? This is rather like running a meals-on-wheels service that subjects its recipients to a stern lecture arguing that the nutritional value of food is a complete myth. Being in two minds about art has long been a valid subject for art but I don't think that *The Fever* approaches this theme honourably. It feels more like a case of wanting to have your cake and eat it than like a courageous self-impaling on a double-pronged contradiction. Like Shawn's *Designated Mourner*, premiered at the National Theatre last year, this earlier drama bifurcates the world crudely and then, in effect, says "A plague on both your houses".

I'd spent the afternoon agonising over which work to vote for in the "Best Play" category of the Critics' Circle Awards for 1996. Seeing *The Fever* cleared my mind on this question. Last spring, the Royal Court produced a new drama about a lonely divorcee who breaks the rules of the day centre for the homeless, where she does voluntary work, by taking in and embarking on a relationship with one of its clients. Through a series of misapprehensions, she winds up being publicly humiliated by this temporary lover, who dismisses her attempted kindness as "all middle-class wank. Do something for some poor sod like me. Feel good about yourself... and get a fuck into the bargain." Why this charge is both correct and completely wrong and why the man both has a right and no right to say this to her are issues which this play leaves out with a largeness of spirit and imagination that put *The Fever* to shame. I shall be voting for Clare McIntyre's *The Thickness of Skin*. To 25 Jan. Royal Court at the Ambassadors, London WC2 (0171-565 5000).

THE WEEK IN REVIEW		THE FILM	THE TV DRAMA	THE PLAY
David Benedict		The Mirror Has Two Faces	Rebecca	The Cripple of Inishmaan
overview		Barbra Streisand produces, directs, writes the theme tune and stars in her remake of a French comedy about a professor who falls for Jeff Bridges and discovers her inner beauty. With Lauren Bacall.	Carlton's two-part dramatisation of Daphne du Maurier's romantic novel with Charles Dance, Orla Rigg and Emilia Fox in the leading role played (spookily) by her mother for the BBC in 1980.	Martin McDonagh follows his debut <i>The Beauty Queen of Leenane</i> with another rural Irish comedy. Nicholas Hytner returns to the theatre directing a first-rate cast including Anita Reeves with designs by Bob Crowley.
critical view		Adam Mars-Jones felt "the eclipse of the character by the director-star sabotages any number of moments". "Bacall is simply wonderful... relentless schmaltz," shuddered the <i>Standard</i> . "This mess of a movie... joyless camp," gasped the <i>Times</i> . "Silly, flibbertigibbet, sentimental and modestly enjoyable," conceded the <i>FT</i> .	Thomas Sutcliffe pointed to Hitchcock, who took "half the time to double the effect". "Inept... a one-dimensional mutilation," stormed the <i>Standard</i> . "Another glossy production from TV's over-used dressing-up box," yawned the <i>Mail</i> . "Exceptional performances," beamed the <i>Times</i> . "Stunning," squealed the <i>Sun</i> .	Paul Taylor "laughed out loud" but was dismayed by the "heartless, opportunistic relationship to the maternal". "Sentimentality and cruelty march hand in hand," agreed the <i>Telegraph</i> . "A tough, boisterous, gifted play," enthused the <i>Times</i> . "Well directed and beautifully designed... highly accomplished," approved the <i>Guardian</i> .
on view		Cert 15, 124 mins, on general release.	Been and gone, but Hitchcock's marvellous film (fewer breasts, far more eroticism) has been re-released. See it.	In rep at the Cottesloe, Royal National Theatre, London SE1 (0171-928 2252).
our view		Some great one-liners drawn in oversincerity. The definition of a vanity project.	Diana Rigg was the best thing in it, but there was little competition.	Beautifully directed and acted, and very funny, but it collapses into <i>Tales of the Unexpected</i> .

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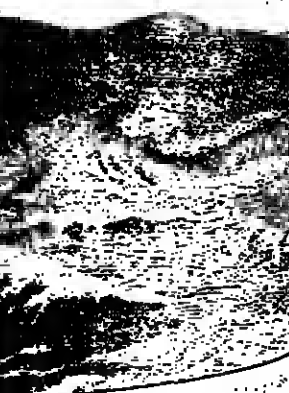
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...the men you see around you bore you? Well, you have an imagination, don't you, woman? Why not conjure a better one out of thin air? In her last novel, *So I Am Glad*, A L Kennedy tried just such a thought-experiment and came up with *Cyano* de Bergerac, swordsman, poet and dignified loser extraordinaire. The result was interesting if a bit one-sided, what with *Cyano* being long dead. She tries the spell again in her new book, and women everywhere will thrill to what she has made: Edward E. Gluck, popular scientist and self-help guru. A cyberneticist and neurobiologist, with an adorable fixation on the Jimmy Stewart of *It's a Wonderful Life*, he is a hunky, brilliant and kindly mixture of Richard Dawkins and Steve Jones. A couple of years ago, I had an argument with a colleague about Kennedy's books. I loved the image of life she suggested: a woman, probably in Glasgow, pottering about on her lonesome ownsome, dreaming of nuns and penguins, worrying about God. This colleague, however, smelt a rat. He felt that A.L.K. if she wasn't careful, was headed for emotional anorexia. Her and her bloody feelings, he said: all she does is cling to her precious feelings. He didn't say that what she needed was a proper going-over, but that was what he meant. Two years on, and which of us is winning? Well, me, obviously. And him, too; because we were both right in our way. When A.L.K. started publishing in the early 1990s, it was wonderful to read a young woman writer who didn't labour at being hip and raunchy. The early Kennedy wrote about charity, about the insights we may find if we plug our ears against the I-want-I-want clamour of erotic desire. But it would, as my red-blooded colleague saw, have been terrible if she had stayed the way she started out. It isn't healthy to miss out completely on eros. It's also a bit vain. And, anyway, eros has a habit of outgrowing itself, no matter how hard you suppress it, in strange and twisted ways. Her new book is made up of ten short stories and a long one. The shorter pieces are faint and provisional, like pencil-sketches for the big picture yet to come. And then she does it: "Original Bliss", the 150-page title story. Here is the woman shuffling about in Glasgow. The worries about God. Dessert recipes and Open University broadcasts and

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books

Inventing men behaving badly

Jenny Turner delights in a blend of caritas and eros

Original Bliss by A L Kennedy, Cape, £14.99



A L Kennedy: stylish Scot

So the men you see around you bore you? Well, you have an imagination, don't you, woman? Why not conjure a better one out of thin air? In her last novel, *So I Am Glad*, A L Kennedy tried just such a thought-experiment and came up with *Cyano* de Bergerac, swordsman, poet and dignified loser extraordinaire. The result was interesting if a bit one-sided, what with *Cyano* being long dead. She tries the spell again in her new book, and women everywhere will thrill to what she has made: Edward E. Gluck, popular scientist and self-help guru. A cyberneticist and neurobiologist, with an adorable fixation on the Jimmy Stewart of *It's a Wonderful Life*, he is a hunky, brilliant and kindly mixture of Richard Dawkins and Steve Jones. A couple of years ago, I had an argument with a colleague about Kennedy's books. I loved the image of life she suggested: a woman, probably in Glasgow, pottering about on her lonesome ownsome, dreaming of nuns and penguins, worrying about God. This colleague, however, smelt a rat. He felt that A.L.K. if she wasn't careful, was headed for emotional anorexia. Her and her bloody feelings, he said: all she does is cling to her precious feelings. He didn't say that what she needed was a proper going-over, but that was what he meant. Two years on, and which of us is winning? Well, me, obviously. And him, too; because we were both right in our way. When A.L.K. started publishing in the early 1990s, it was wonderful to read a young woman writer who didn't labour at being hip and raunchy. The early Kennedy wrote about charity, about the insights we may find if we plug our ears against the I-want-I-want clamour of erotic desire. But it would, as my red-blooded colleague saw, have been terrible if she had stayed the way she started out. It isn't healthy to miss out completely on eros. It's also a bit vain. And, anyway, eros has a habit of outgrowing itself, no matter how hard you suppress it, in strange and twisted ways. Her new book is made up of ten short stories and a long one. The shorter pieces are faint and provisional, like pencil-sketches for the big picture yet to come. And then she does it: "Original Bliss", the 150-page title story. Here is the woman shuffling about in Glasgow. The worries about God. Dessert recipes and Open University broadcasts and

sharp little obiter dicta about why Scottish people just can't help being stylish and why modern dance just can't help being crap. And the bottomless need for eros, and its diversion into perversion. "Original Bliss" is a revelation. It's the best piece of writing A L Kennedy has yet done. Edward E. Gluck is an excellent guy, properly man-sized, big of brain and heart and wit. Only Edward, as the heroine discovers, has a bit of a problem. He is addicted to really nasty hard-core porn. He likes pictures of women being fucked by two men simultaneously: "On video, they pulse in and out of time, like something feeding, a fuck parasite." He likes pictures of women being fucked by dogs. He can only get off, and is compelled to get off ever more furiously, on pictures of women being hurt. He hates himself for doing it. But not even his self-help guru resources can show him how to stop. Along with the shuffling and the worrying about God, there has always been a streak of violent sexual fantasy in Kennedy's writing. It's been there in both her novels, although readers seem to choose to ignore it. And it's very much there in *Stella Does Tricks*, the A.L.K.-scripted movie shortly to be released. This streak has never been well integrated into the body of her writing. It has sat like the scum on the top of a soup-pan, which is why it has been so easy for the dainty-stomached reader to skim it off. But you won't be able to skim off the violent sexual fantasy in this one. And that is a wonderful thing: it brings Edward alive in a way *Cyano* never managed. It brings the heroine who tries to love him full-bloodedly alive as well. It also makes the current fashion for kink-by-numbers stories look pretty thin and stupid, though that is an incidental concern. Caritas without eros is empty; eros without caritas is blind. I've never been so delighted to leave an argument only half-right.

Island in the stream of history

Melissa Benn welcomes a moving first novel from a veteran political thinker

When Memory Dies by A Sivanandan, Arcadia, £9.99

A Sivanandan is one of the few political writers who really matter in this country: a polemicist who loves language like a poet, a deadly serious writer with the lightest of touches. In his most frequent form, the essay, he is without peer, able to command attention from that first declarative sentence. For him, the essay is both a kind of war and the place for tender argument. Like that other great black writer, CLR James, Sivanandan - director of the Institute of Race Relations and founder editor of his journal *Race and Class* - is largely a prophet without honour in this his adopted country. Yet he has a formidable international reputation. Essays such as "From Resistance to Rebellion" stand as definitive accounts of black people's struggle in postwar Britain. Thinking globally, Sivanandan was one of the first writers to consider the implications of the new technology and its impact on the third world. Again like "CLR", this country's relative blindness to his talents has less to do with his "colour" than his politics. He remains that most unfashionable of creatures: a socialist who believes in the persistence of class. In the past decade, when it has become the vogue to discuss British blackness in terms of "identity", Sivanandan has stubbornly continued to address material as well as cultural realities. Now, at the age of 70, he has written this profoundly simple, profoundly complex first novel about three generations of Sri Lankan men, each shaped by the politics of their time. While the narrative is carried forward by father, son and grandson, the true central character is surely Sri Lanka: a country like many others, deformed by colonialism, potentially liberated by independence, then deformed once again by "ethnic conflict". Political novels come in many forms, but there is a fundamental difference between the writer who works from within a political faith and the one who describes from the outside. James Baldwin was at his brilliant best when he wrote from his knowledge of, and connection to, black anger. At the other extreme, Joe Klein's clever, humane but cool *Primary Colors* epitomises the outsider approach. But the insider novel always risks piety and didacticism - a suspicion that the author is moving characters around a chess board, chasing positions without organic purpose. That Sivanandan largely avoids these traps is down not just to his own craft but to his certainty that political faith is indivisible from both intellect and feeling. This indivisibility also justifies the novel's realistic simplicity. Irony, cynicism, clever switches in time or character, would make no sense here. A person belongs to their place, their family, their history and the choices that they make. For this is, above all, a novel about the importance of action. For Saha, the young man from the dry north of his country born in the early part of the century, it is his move from a rural village to the city of Colombo - his contact with the petty glamour and snobbery of colonial rule and with working-class resistance to it - that shapes his story. For Saha's son Rajan, born in the tiny town where his father is made sub-postmaster, it is the wonder and absurdity of a British education that deeply affects him: "The economics professor went on and on about apples and oranges and marginal utility.... But it was the professor of poetry who grabbed me most...the raw feel of Donne and Keats and Hopkins and Eliot...answered to my waking sensibilities about religion and sex and fantasy and despair." Yet colo-

rialism corrupts everything. The flowers in the garden of rich relatives who might fix Rajan up with a job disgust him. "The orchids and the imported roses" were needed "to remind them of their wealth, like they needed poor relations". The final story rests with Vijay. It is his destiny to make sense of the vicious battles between Tamil and Sinhalese that have torn Sri Lanka apart and pushed Sivanandan, a Tamil, out of the country in 1958. A militant opponent of the crude nationalism that sets Sinhalese against Tamil, Vijay has his most painful conflict with his sensual but cold wife Manel, who despises his politics. Husband and wife argue and reconcile a dozen times, until hatred and misunderstanding dissolve into indifference. Looking at his wife, Vijay realises "This was who she really was, this was who she had always been...He felt gentle towards her at last." But this is not just a hook about Sri Lanka. The struggles it touches upon, both moral and political, face us all: the battle between our hunger for love or learning or success and our need, even passion, for integrity. In this sense the book does have a message, a direction. The author hovers above his creations, taking each firmly but kindly through their moral maze. This is a book of, and about, many lifetimes. Towards the end Vijay reflects on his family's bloody heritage, concluding that "They did not divide things, events, people into what would make them happy and what wouldn't. Everything was life. The important thing was to go with the grain of it." Here is the notion of organic unity made explicit. And yet you probably have to wait until you are 70 to risk such a simple and complex sentence - to risk the reader grasping the unsentimental meaning that underlies the lucid thought.



Vicious battles in Sri Lanka pushed Sivanandan out of the country

All at sea with Mystic Meg

Jeanette Winterson's career has become a genuine tragedy says Felipe Fernández-Armesto

Gut Symmetries by Jeanette Winterson, Granta, £15.99

Boy meets girl. Boy cats girl. In Jeanette Winterson's new novel, however, the villain's appetite fails him and his wife - or what is left of her - runs off with his former mistress, after plastic surgery, for a lesbian happy ending. At one level, this is an issues-novel, but the cannibalism-issue and surgery-issue are only raised in the last pages. And there are only three speaking characters, though a few others appear sketchily by way of recall. The best feature is the economy with which the triangular relationship - husband, wife, concubine to both - is handled. So even with help from generous designers, the author needs a lot of padding to fill a short book. Some of it - about 60 pages' worth - is provided by Winterson's familiar obsessions: tarot, lesbian analytics, the burdens of religious upbringing, father-fixation, the

beatness of men. The heroines reminisce tediously about their births and childhoods, like mixed-up novelists in therapy. This is good for maybe 80 pages more. There is a fair amount of straightforward tautology. A small but much-hyped contribution is made by allusions to the "Grand Universal Theory" trailed in the title: one of the lesbians works on anodurms, but as the author's knowledge of the subject seems to be drawn mainly from *The Physics of Immateriality*, she might as well be an expert on knitting or cookery. Winterson reads theoretical physics with help from the tarot pack. She is an adept of post-scientific holism. Her efforts bear the same relation to physics as Mystic Meg's to astronomy. If her book were more readable, it would be suitable for serialisation in *Good House-keeping*. "Love only works on superstrings because it reminds him of

spaghetti", said Signora Rosetti"; Jeanette Winterson or Jilly Cooper? "The hard-hat, bull-nose building blocks of matter...have to be returned as an infinite web of relationships": Jeanette Winterson or Tony Blair? Not only politicians mix clichés to mask clap-trap. As always, Winterson shows she can use language deftly; but she is a wordsmith with nothing to say. Some of her strategic devices are clever. There is a genuinely intriguing subplot in which one of the characters is pursued by Jews intent on discovering a diamond secreted inside her against Nazi depredations. This helps keep the reader going through the stodgy passages of padding. Shipboard settings of various kinds are used at intervals to create capsule-like frameworks which can heighten drama or suspense. Disappointingly, Winterson's inattention to detail spoils these promising

efforts: her ignorance of routine at sea makes ludicrous a crucial storm-tossed sequence on a small boat. Like the science, the maritime motif becomes a maelstrom for the writer: she is obviously all at sea. The mystery of the diamond is made baffling by confused physiology. The dénouement is a drearily extemporised *deus ex machina*. There are some admirably amusing dialogues in the flip manner of Delano Ames but they fail to convince because the characters speak in barely distinguishable voices: short sentences, excised main verbs, metaphors tortured into daring compression. All fiction is autohagiographical, but it is confusing for the reader if everybody in the book is based on the author. When we hear that one of the heroines is called Alluvia we wonder whether the whole effort is self-satire - a joke on critics disposed to take it seriously. Jeanette Winterson is her own best critic. In this novel she confides that lesbianism is narcissism - just for a mirror image. She seems to have lost the ability to stand back from her work, judge it dispassionately and discard the rubbish. Her career has become a genuine tragedy - failure worked on ability by hubris. She could be a first-rate journalist, a slick stylist who knows a little about a lot. Instead, she has condemned herself to frustration as a novelist, in an art for which her talent seems exhausted. There must be something, apart from tarot and lesbianism, which she could write about with deep knowledge and understanding. If she sticks to ships and physics, she is doomed to trip up over her own pretensions. Meanwhile, she imitates her characterisation of new physics, "belching at the dinner table of common sense".

Paperbacks

By Christopher Hirst and Lucasta Miller

I Came, I Saw by Norman Lewis (Picador, £7.99) The wonderfully odd, compulsive autobiography (originally titled *Jackdaw Cake*) by the maestro of travel writing has been expanded by 50 pages in this new edition. The extraordinary facts of his long life - a childhood with spooky spiritualist parents in Enfield, marriage into a family of Sicilian exiles with Mafia connections - are greatly enhanced by Lewis's deadpan delivery, illuminated by flashes of black humour. New material includes a spell in Italy in the Sixties; a typically Lewisian Arcadia tainted by drugs, kidnapping and poor hygiene.

The Devil: A Biography by Peter Stanford (Mandarin, £7.99) It seems that the Devil not only has the best tunes but the best books

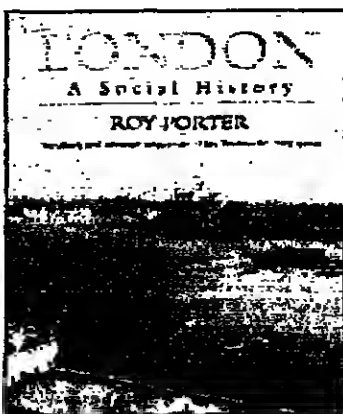
as well. This sober, intelligent account reveals that the Devil is entirely a Christian creation (he is scarcely mentioned in the Old Testament), made "credible and compelling" by Milton. But diabolic parallels have appeared through human history. Stanford traces the various incarnations of the dark presence from the Crusades and the Cathar Heresy to Waco, Texas, and the Manson "Family". Satan, he astutely suggests, "lives on as a way of dealing with [the] unspeakable, unimaginable or intangible."

London: A Social History by Roy Porter (Penguin, £15.00) Piquant as a Hogarth etching, every page of this vast panorama glitters with luxuriant detail. Fused Roman coins testify to the fury of Boadicea's revolt in AD61, while in 1666 the Lord Mayor remarked of another great fire, "a woman could piss it out". Porter suggests that London's "hour on the stage" lasted from 1570 to 1986, encompassing 18th century pleasures - an average of two pints of gin per week for every living soul - and hectic Victorian industry. In a furious conclusion, he insists that Thatcher's "balkanisation of the metropolis"

has been London's greatest disaster.

Leading the Blind by Alan Sillitoe (Penguin, £9.00) Sillitoe has discovered a rich vein of unconscious humour in the guidebooks produced for doughty 19th century tourists. After offering advice ("a portable india-rubber bath is an immense comfort") and phrases in four languages ("I am very much inclined to vomit"), the guides plied readers with staggering detail. In Germany, we are told the exot wounds suffered by Gustavus Adolphus in 1632 ("five gunshots, two cuts, one stab"), while in Kanchi we learn that a British officer crossed a crocodile tank by running across their backs. The armchair traveller won't find a more enjoyable read this year.

A User's Guide to the Millennium by J G Ballard (Flamingo, £6.99) Culled from over 30 years output, this breezy assemblage of essays and reviews fizzles with subversive intelligence. More than footnotes to a brilliant, disturbing oeuvre, this is critical journalism of a high order. While damning *Star Wars* and devaluing Joyce's *Ulysses*



("curiously lacking in imagination"), Ballard lauds *Blue Velvet* and Sade's *The 120 Days of Sodom* ("a black cathedral"). A brief coda to *Empire of the Sun* is a highlight of the book. Following his bizarre childhood, the *ouri* has become the ordinary for Ballard. Across an astonishing range, his ironic slant is ceaselessly stimulating.

Thaïkovsky by Anthony Holden (Bantam, £9.99) No composer fulfils romantic expectations of the tortured artist better than Thaïkovsky - and none offers the biographer richer pickings in terms of mystery, scandal and tragedy on an operatic scale. His life was marked by manic creativity and depressive moods, a

The Thames from Richmond House by Canaletto

string of homosexual affairs, a disastrous marriage followed by a breakdown, a doomed infatuation with his 13-year-old nephew and an ambiguous death - was it cholera, as officially stated, or suicide? Anthony Holden weighs the evidence with admirable sanity, and concludes that Thaïkovsky did indeed kill himself at the behest of a secret "court of honour" rather than face public prosecution for sodomy.

Driving My Father by Susan Wicks (Faber, £6.99) This sensitive family memoir by the poet Susan Wicks charts the decline of her elderly father following her mother's death. It's in a similar vein to Blake Morrison's *And When Did You Last See Your Father?*, but its tone is warmer and more touching. Where Morrison was objective and detached, Wicks's prose shimmers with subjectivity. She has a poet's ability to invest emotional meaning in inanimate objects and to capture the intensity of the individual moment, whether she's giving us a brilliant shard of childhood memory or suddenly catching herself looking into the future.

The books you listen to



To shake up those who still think of audiotapes as a poor substitute for books, here are two much-heard-than-read classics. First, a splendid pairing of Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall in *Bold Venture* (Hodder, 2hrs, £8.50); their classic 1950s radio series about piracy in Havana. It oozes 1950s nostalgia but keeps you

clutching the edge of your seat. Second, an unabridged *Canterbury Tales* (Penguin, 9hrs, £19.99). Neville Coghill's sensitive translation (readers include Richard Briers, and Prunella Scales), reminds us how much we can still learn from Chaucer about poetic English and medieval society.

Christina Hardymont

Royal Festival Hall
on the South Bank

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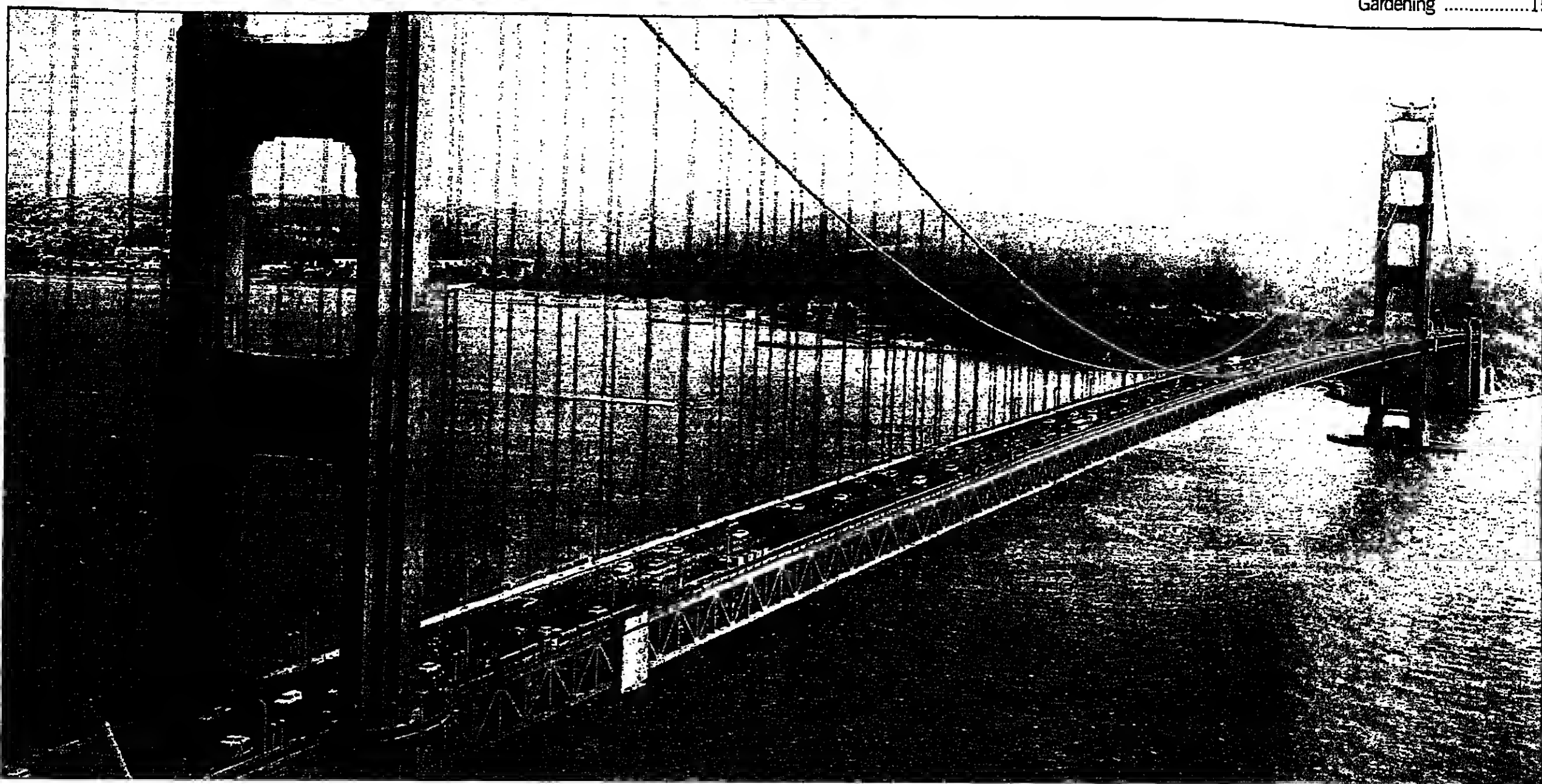
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All across the nation

... there's a strange vibration. Nigel Williamson revisits San Francisco

On 14 January, 1967, more than 20,000 hippies gathered in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park for the first "human be-in". The event marked the beginning of the summer of love, a date which now ranks in local history with the 1849 gold rush and the 1906 earthquake. The city is now preparing to celebrate the 30th anniversary of that extraordinary year of psychedelic drugs and music.

Visitors arriving at San Francisco airport are met by an exhibition of images of Jerry Garcia. Janis Joplin and other icons of the flower power era. Every guidebook to the city contains a eulogy to "the spirit of '67" and a trip to the Haight-Ashbury district is high (pun intended) on any tourist trail. A few sad and notable casualties apart, it seems that old hippies never die: they simply become tourist attractions.

It's a far cry from the scene 30 years ago. The official police report on the "human be-in" complained of "hippies high on LSD obstructing and creating a nuisance". Dozens were huddled away in paddy wagons while the Grateful Dead, Quicksilver Messenger Service and Jefferson Airplane played for free and Timothy Leary, the LSD guru, chanted "turn on, tune in, drop out". Over the coming months, to the consternation of the city authorities, an estimated 200,000 young people heeded the call and moved into the area around Haight and Ashbury Streets, a short stroll from Golden Gate Park. Hashbury, as it inevitably was known, became the hippie capital of the world.

Some were drawn by the drugs and the "free love", others had an interest in Eastern mysticism. But above all they were drawn by the music. In addition to the Dead, the Airplane and Quicksilver there were Country Joe and the Fish, the Steve Miller Band, Santana and Janis Joplin, all living, playing and getting high within a few blocks of each other. It was an extraordinary flowering of musical talent.

Today the sites associated with flower power's brief blooming have become much visited. Fifysomethings who look as if they took one trip too many, and kids who weren't even born in 1967, mingle in Golden Gate

Park, strumming guitars and smoking dope. There are more ponytails than at a gymkhana and sufficient acres of swirling tie-dye to induce a permanent migraine.

Top of any psychedelic heritage tour is 710 Ashbury, a large, rambling house where the Grateful Dead lived in communal style throughout 1967. It was famously busted for drugs at the end of that summer in a police raid that marked the beginning of the end of the hippie dream. The Dead moved out in March the following year. A sign put up by the owners asks the legion of "Dead heads" not to ring the doorbell. Those wishing to pay tribute to the late Jerry Garcia are invited to leave flowers: "If you do respect Jerry and believe in peace and love then you will respect our wishes and good karma will follow you in your life."

On the corner of Haight and Cole Street, a two-minute walk from the Dead's house, was the Straight Theater. As a farwell to the area, the Dead parked two flatbed trucks across the street, ran a cable from inside and played the free concert pictured on their Live Dead album. The theatre was chaotically run as a hippie community centre and didn't have a dance licence, so the bands playing there had to pretend to be giving dancing lessons. Santana were among those who got their start here. Today a "thrill store" (charity shop) stands on the site.

At the other end of Cole Street is the Panhandle, a thin, green artery running parallel to the Haight and leading into Golden Gate Park. Here the Diggers, a group of anarcho-syndicalists, dispensed free meals to hungry hippies, and it was also here in June 1967 that Jimi Hendrix made a legendary impromptu appearance with equipment borrowed from the Jefferson Airplane.

Almost every street around the Haight has tales to tell of rock'n'roll craziness.

At 112 Lyon Street, Janis Joplin lived with Country Joe McDonald. Unsurprisingly, her rowdy lifestyle did not endear her to the neighbours and Janis was evicted early in 1968. Yet it was not sex, drugs or even loud music that were her downfall here: Joplin was thrown out for a breach of the "no pets" clause in her lease. Today a sign in the house

next door tells those who come to gaze at the scene of her excesses, "RAD". On closer inspection it stands not for Remember the Acid Dream, but for Residents Against Drugs.

An infamous palace of rock and roll debauchery was the Jefferson Airplane's mansion at 2400 Fulton Street. The Airplane were always the aristocrats of San Francisco rock, with a big record company advance which they invested in an imposing four-storey house with Doric columns. The opera singer Caruso sheltered in the house during the 1906 earthquake, but in the Airplane's heyday the mansion rocked with infamous parties, often lasting days at a time. One celebrated bash is pictured on the front of the band's album *Bless Its Pointed Little Head*, with bassist Jack Casady passed out with his hand still gripped around a bottle.

With views over both Golden Gate Park and the ocean, the mansion occupies one of the prime real estate sites in the city, and the Airplane who once sang "up the revolution" eventually made a very capitalist profit on the property.

Another much-visited location is the imposing mansion overlooking Buena Vista Park where the Steve Miller Band made their early recordings in a basement studio, before the singer went on to stardom as the Space Cowboy, the Gangster of Love and The Joker. The house was later owned by ex-Hollie Graham Nash. It is much photographed by fans who believe, wrongly, that it is the home he sang about so smugly in *Our House* "with two cats in the yard", with Crosby, Stills and Young.

If Golden Gate Park was the birthplace of the summer of love, then Buena Vista Park at the other end of the Haight was its final resting place. The dream was too good to last and by October 1967 hard drugs and street crime were rife in the area. The Diggers organised a mock funeral in the park, at which they buried the sign from the Psychedelic Shop at 1535 Haight Street, the world's first such emporium, where half of the space was given over to a meditation room called the "calm center".

Where the Haight hippies once hurmt their incense and contemplated the nature of the

cosmos, you can today buy a take-away pizza.

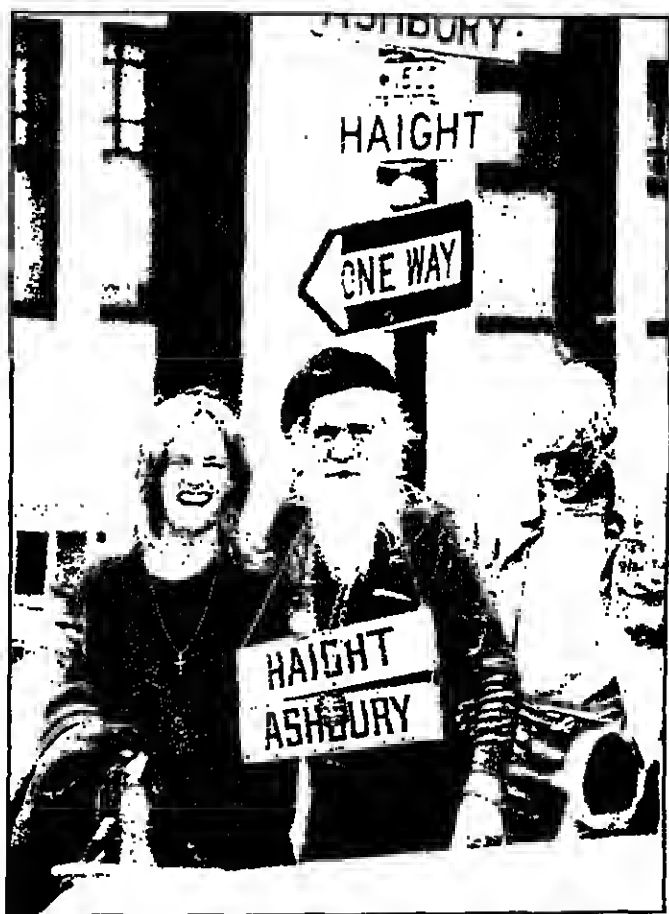
By 1968 most of the musicians had moved out of the Haight, many of them the short distance across Golden Gate Bridge to the clean air and giant redwoods of Marin County. Just over the bridge is the harbour of Sausalito, the original setting of Otis Redding's classic "Sittin' On The Dock Of The Bay". The soul singer had become a hippie hero following his storming appearance at the Monterey pop festival and in August 1967 was playing a week-long residency in San Francisco. When his downtown hotel was besieged by female fans he was invited to stay on one of the ramshackle houseboats in the dock and the result was his best – and last – song. He died in a plane crash three months later.

San Francisco has always been a city rich in musical association. Al Jolson died here after recording a radio show with Bing Crosby, and Billie Holiday was busted for possession of narcotics. The suite where she was raided at the Mark Twain Hotel now commands a premium rate and is decorated with press cuttings of her arrest.

Fittingly, the birthplace of flower power also hosted the death of punk when the Sex Pistols split up in the city after an epic fight between Johnny Rotten, Sid Vicious and manager Malcolm McLaren at the Miyako Hotel.

Yet, musically, it will always be the summer of love for which San Francisco is best remembered. Anyone who was ever briefly touched with the spirit of 1967 will find Haight-Ashbury an evocative trip down memory lane. Get out the tie dye and the bell-bottoms, wipe the dust off those scratchy old records – and be sure to wear some flowers in your hair.

If you're going to San Francisco ... Go now. Nigel Williamson flew just before the latest fares cut, with TWA via St Louis for £346 return; he stayed at the Californian Hotel (001 415 585 2500) in the city centre for \$89 (£53) per night. Now, you can fly non-stop from London Heathrow to San Francisco on British Airways (0345 222111), United (0181-990 9900) or Virgin Atlantic (01293 747747). The latter has a "MegaSaver" fare of £307 return, including tax, if you book before 25 January.



Top: San Francisco, the pot of gold that lies at the end of the rainbow

Above: 1967 summer of love now ranks in local history alongside the 1849 gold rush and the 1906 earthquake. Almost every street around the Haight has tales to tell of rock 'n' roll craziness

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Simon Calder

The high points of Belgium

Stephen Wood takes a one-day ski package to the Ardennes



PHOTOGRAPH: TONY STONE

Belgium isn't most people's first choice as a skiing destination. It wasn't mine, either, when I decided to see off the old year on skis. I wanted to go to Scotland. But December's cold fronts had taken a wrong turning somewhere over Poland, and Scotland's snow was delivered to England by mistake. The bad omen on the Scottish ski "Hotline" forced me to look elsewhere.

The specialist ski travel agencies I telephoned were bemused by my next plan. They had never organised a one-day ski package to the Alps. And, politely enough, they made it clear that they were not going to start now.

A little detective work solved the problem. I knew the cold weather was coming from the east – but by which route? Ignoring Michael Fish and studying the bottom right-hand corner of the television screen, I discovered that it was travelling via the Low Countries. One phone call to Belgium, and I had the good news: the snow was excellent and the forecast perfect.

My new plan formed. The dirt-cheap (£49) overnight London-Brussels route by train, ferry and train would get me into a hire-car (not so cheap, at £69 for the day) soon after 8am, and I'd be in the Ardennes for a late breakfast; coming back I would have time for dinner in Brussels before catching the 11pm to London. The day-trip Eurostar offer until Monday) was no good to me because the earliest train gets in only at 11.26am. But the overnight schedule was perfect: leaving London at 10pm I could spend the whole next day skiing and be back home at 7.15am the morning after.

Ski in the Low Countries? The majority of you (I stand almost alone in my affection for Belgium) will have spotted an obvious error here. As you know it, Belgium is heavily into chips, light on famous people, and as flat as a bored Briton driving through it to get somewhere more interesting. But the Ardennes forest, in the south-eastern, French-speaking corner of the country between Liège and the German border, is a vast, rolling ocean of pine trees; and though they hardly exceed 700m in altitude, the hills have nine "alpine" ski areas, and a further 49 offering other winter sports, mainly cross-country skiing.

I headed first to Thier des Rethons, just outside the town of Spa – where the water comes from. At 540m, it offers little more than one long nursery slope, plus one of everything else: lift, restaurant, ski-hire shop. The coincidence of snowfalls within

the New Year's holiday had left the piste in poor shape, with a fair amount of vegetable and mineral matter poking through; but the ambience on the slope was terrific. There were lots of children and beginners, no flash skiers or snowboarders.

You pay by the ride on the lift, which runs along its own charming forest track lined with saplings. It costs just under £4 for 10 rides – as many as you would want for a slope which is plain and simple, and takes just over a minute for a direct descent. Only one lift means, of course, that the fun stops if it stops; unfortunately it broke down in the afternoon as I was returning my hired skis (cost: £8 per day).

Thier des Rethons is a really good place for nervous beginners. But the lack of hazards – even gradients – would soon become tiresome for intermediates; and the same is also true of the slightly more challenging Mont des Brumes nearby. Here the 1,000m run, in a big bite taken out of the forest, steepens sharply in the middle before flattening out on to a nursery slope. The middle section was quite fun, icy on one side and turning vegetable on the other; but the most difficult patch was the wicked moguls underneath the main drag lift. Mont des Brumes is so popular that it can charge £1.15 merely for access to the ski area, and the surface had... "fired from the crowds."

In an ideal world, I'd tell you about more of the Ardennes ski areas. Unfortunately, the tourist office's resort map may be the most worthless document I produced since Neville Chamberlain arrived home from Munich. It is easy to read and with helpful symbols – but doesn't show where the ski areas actually are. I spent a precious hour driving around Malmédy hunting one which had seemingly changed both its location and its name. When you are half-a-night short of sleep, such frustrations hurt.

In that state, all emotions become more intense. The forest of the Ardennes is always beautiful; but with snow-covered trees beneath a huge, pink sunset it seemed miraculous. The inner glow began to fade only in Brussels, as the 11pm train fell behind schedule and the temperature fell towards minus 10; it disappeared completely on the ferry, under the onslaught of a herd of French school kids determined to enjoy being up so late. I got home very short of sleep, and feeling a bit stupid. One day's skiing? I must have been mad.

For snow conditions at Thier des Rethons, call 00 32 87 77 30 28; allow for a little exaggeration. Next Wednesday's travel section of The Tabloid is devoted to skating in Belgium.



If you were paying attention last week, you will have read of the silly New Year air fares. It will take the average British worker under a fortnight to earn £700, enough for a return flight to Australia on Britannia Airways – plus a weekend trip to New York on Virgin Atlantic (a 747, not a balloon).

Before you seize bargains like these, though, you should be aware of some of the pitfalls of modern aviation. Take Rostov-on-Don in southern Russia; a bulletin released by Airports Council International cheerfully relates that "each week is full of surprises". The airport director, Alexander Parsbakov, tells of one incident: "Checking an aircraft after passengers had left, we found a band grenade. Fortunately without the fuse, but otherwise perfectly operational."

God forbid that you should ever find yourself in the sort of emergency beloved of Hollywood disaster movies, and are required to fly the aircraft. But if it happens, just hope that you are aboard the Bournemouth-based airline Palmar. On page 30

of the in-flight magazine *Whispers*, you will find instructions for flying the British Aerospace 146, the airline's only plane. An extract: "At a suitable height, say 29,000 feet, pull the four levers back gently until things quieten down a bit, then get the map out to find the way to your destination."

Next Christmas I shall send my wish-list to Continental Airlines rather than Santa. Diane Dunn of Wimbledon writes: "Last August I was booked to travel with Continental from Newark to Gatwick. However, due to overbooking I accepted a \$700 voucher to stand down and travel with Virgin to Heathrow a couple of hours later. "A mix-up at Gatwick resulted in my receiving my baggage many phone calls and two days later. I wrote a letter to the chairman of Continental in the heat of the moment. Time passed and I forgot about it."

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Jewel in the muck

Cathy Packe remembers her student days in Durham

A poll of a few friends of mine showed they have widely differing memories of their first day at university. Inexplicably, I remember one phrase from the address by the Vice-Chancellor to new students. He described the city of Durham, our new home, as "a jewel in the muck-heap". Although this is rather damning of the countryside immediately around, his description of the city was an understatement.

If at all possible, Durham is best approached by rail. As you pull into the station, the view of the medieval cathedral is stunning. The cathedral can be seen from almost anywhere in the city; the uninterrupted panorama from my first college room was unblemished, as most of the new building in Durham has been on the outskirts.

The historic heart of the city is built on a peninsula, gouged out by a loop in the river Wear, and densely wooded along its banks. The river separates the old centre from the rest of the city, and keeps it aloof from modern life.

For centuries, city life revolved around Palace Green and the few cobbled streets leading from it. This is a village green on a grand scale. The cathedral and castle face each other at opposite ends; the original university library runs between them; on the fourth side is a row of almshouses now converted into a restaurant.

For most students, the cathedral is just a landmark in the city. I remember it mainly as the place to go for afternoon tea. These days there are other places to go – and no doubt prices have gone up – but when I was an undergraduate, a scone, jam, cream and a cup of tea in the cathedral's Undercroft restaurant cost 27p.

Although the bell, chiming out every 15 minutes, still regulates the pace of life in Durham, the cathedral itself no longer dominates life as it would have done in the days of Saints Bede and Cuthbert. That honour now goes to the university, which employs a large percentage of the population, and owns many of the city's oldest buildings. But town and gown are inextricably entwined; the university was founded when the bishops donated their official residence to become University College – now known to all students simply as "Castle".

Gradually, other colleges were founded, and the university is still expanding, but students remain in the castle, living at the most stylish student address in the country.



Durham Castle: the most stylish student address in the country

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID ROSE

It is also a great place for entertaining. All the colleges hold an annual ball, some more formal than others. I remember the ball at the castle as the highlight of the social calendar, with champagne served in the courtyard, dinner in the great hall, and a cartoon projected on to the keep.

From Palace Green, cobbled streets tumble down and join up with The Bailey and Sadler Street, which leads into the Market Place. Many of the old houses provide student accommodation or lecture theatres; others are homes for the academic staff. I particularly remember peering every day into

the study of Duncombe Cottage and being amazed by the sheer number of books on the shelves, and the piles of papers on the floor.

Not all of Durham is ancient, of course. In the sixties several new colleges were built, as well as the students' union building, Duncin House. Events here were at the opposite end of the social scale from those in the castle. The surroundings were austere in daylight and cheerless at night – even under the flashing lights of the Friday discos. It is difficult to imagine that students still go there, as I did, for a hip night out. But maybe small groups of female undergraduates do still dance around their handbags, while sporty youths inevitably eye them up.

This area is ageing badly, with the concrete now streaked and dirty. But as a place to look out from, rather than to look at, Duncin House is hard to beat.

Durham is a magnificent place to be a student – small enough to be manageable, but with the facilities of a larger university; and a beautiful setting in which to spend three years of one's life.

If I have a regret about my student days, it is that student life – and this probably applies anywhere – tends to be one-dimensional, which meant there was so awful lot of Durham that I missed. Given the chance to be a student again, I wouldn't hesitate to go back.

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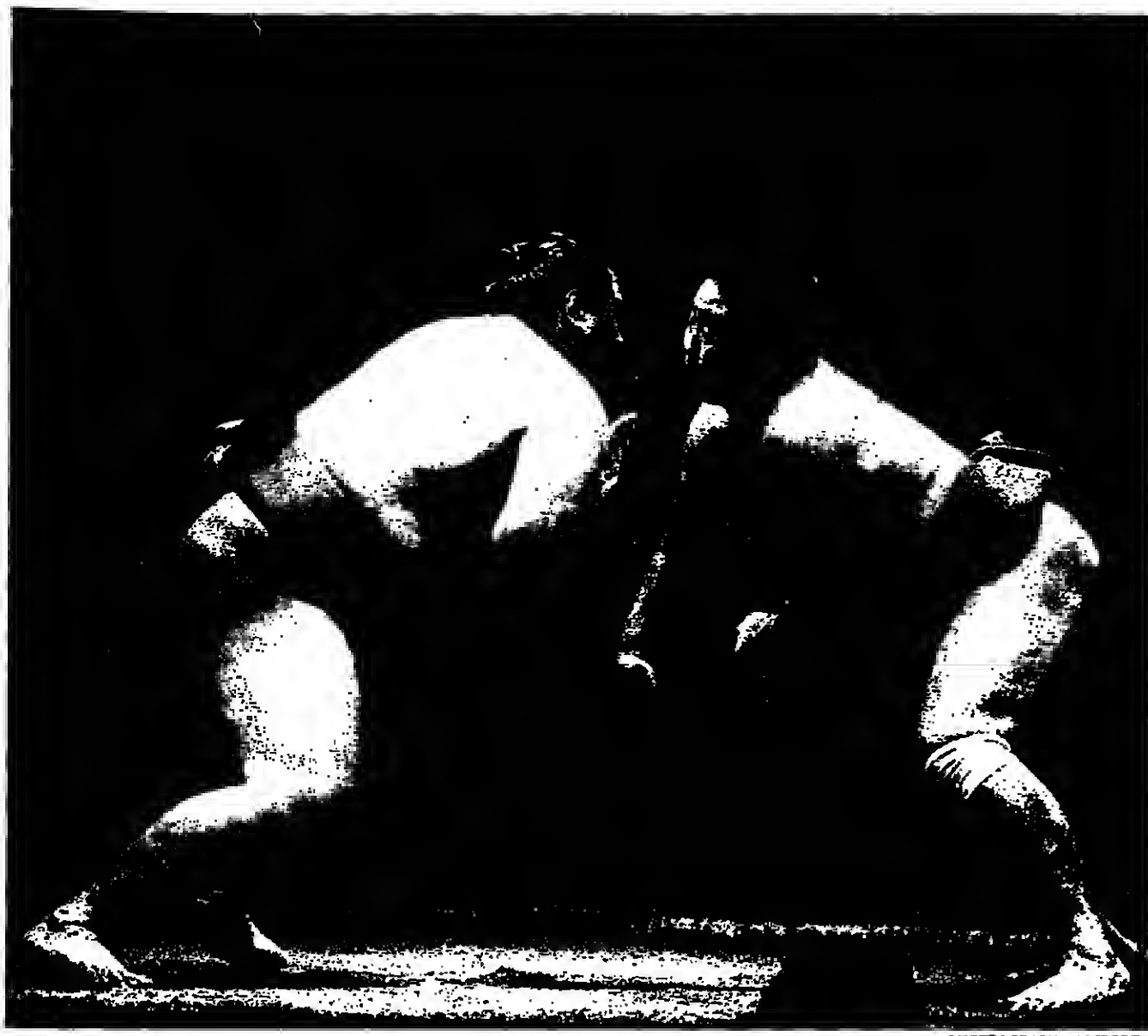
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Long, hot sumo

By Kate Mikhail



PHOTOGRAPH: ALLSPORT

Archaic, ritualistic and stereotypically Japanese, Sumo wrestling, could easily leave you cold. But experience the energy of a packed auditorium, witness the spectacle of two huge human masses hurtling headlong into each other and you'll be hooked – transfixed in a mixture of awe and disbelief.

When Japanese friends sat me down in front of the television set to watch a Sumo match I can't say I was much impressed; and quickly tired of what seemed a very brief and futile scrap between two staggeringly fat wrestlers. But given that I was visiting Tokyo during one of only six annual tournaments, I decided that seeing this major cultural event in the flesh – and loads of it – could not be missed. I hoped it might even give me a better understanding of the Japanese psyche.

Tokyo's National Sumo Stadium, in Ryogoku, eastern Tokyo, is a few minutes from the Metro (Ryogoku stop) and towers over an otherwise uniform urban landscape. The build-up to the match begins well before you step inside – walking from the Metro to the stadium, you are more than likely to find yourself accompanied by one or two contestants who stroll nonchalantly along with a certain arrogance and presence that only such an unearthly bulk can achieve.

The thought of these men living and training in their Sumo "stables" makes them seem in even more of another world than they already appear as they thunder down the street.

Sumo giants, who weigh an average of 300lb (21 stone), are considered national heroes and sex symbols. They earn big money, command respect and, being such a prestigious and wealthy catch, tend to marry the most petite and stunning of Japanese women.

Having said that, their image took a serious pummeling this year, with allegations of corruption, tax evasion, *yakuza* (Mafia) connections and fight-rigging. Fans were devastated, particularly as the claims came from an ex-champ. Onaruto, who mysteriously died shortly before he was due to give a press conference – but not before he wrote his book, *Bout-Rigging*, which accused the *yakuza* of buying wrestlers and rigging matches.

Walking into the stadium was like entering a temple. Far-off chanting led me to where the action was taking place; a vast space with seats reaching

Weighty matters

Getting there: The cheapest way to reach the Japanese capital is on an air ticket to Australia. For example, Flightbookers (0171-757 2468) has a fare to Sydney via Tokyo of £686 on All Nippon Airways for departures today; you save £60 for mid-week travel, but be warned that availability is limited. You are allowed a stopover in Tokyo en route in either direction. If you cannot travel to Australia, Creative Tours (0171-495 1775) sells a discounted fare of £809 non-stop on Japan Airlines.

Getting Sumo tickets: This month's Sumo tournament in Tokyo starts tomorrow and runs to Sunday 26 January. The National Sumo Stadium is in eastern Tokyo, and is very close to Ryogoku, on the JR Sohu line. If you have any problems, the Japan National Tourist Organisation's tourist information centre has staff who speak English and are very helpful (3502 1461).

The next two tournaments in Tokyo are: 9-23 March and 11-25 May.

It is not necessary to get up at the crack of dawn to queue for tickets, as you will invariably be told by everyone you ask. Not, at least, if you go in the first week, or early in the second, before the big players start coming face-to-face in the build up to the final battle. Tickets can be bought on the day from the box office, at a cost of only 1,500 yen (£8).

Getting information: Japanese National Tourist Organisation: 5th Floor, 20 Savile Row, London W1X 1AE (0171-734 9638).

orate seats which no amount of money can buy.

Luckily I'd come equipped with a *bento* box – this is a tasty Japanese lunch box with rice, vegetables and a choice of meat or fish – so settled down on a floor cushion, chopsticks in hand, eyes glued to the stage to see what happens when an irresistible force hits an immovable object.

The scene was striking. The medieval splendour and ancient rituals were totally at odds with 20th-century Japan – a country where cash machines talk to you and one of the latest female pop stars to be inundated with fan mail is a virtual reality computer creation.

The atmosphere inside the stadium is very relaxed and officials are little in evidence, so if you want a better view, your best bet is to grab your camera and stroll down to the front, where you can stand at a safe distance from tumbling wrestlers and catch all the skill of the fight.

Originally, Sumo was a religious Shinto ceremony carried out for the benefit of the Gods. The ring is made of clay and outlined with a thick, circular rope. The rules are simple: the first to be pushed from the ring or to touch the ground with any part of his body other than the soles of his feet is the loser.

The lead-up to each fight is mesmerising, with lots of salt-throwing to purify the ring and thigh-slapping and foot-stamping to ward off evil spirits, honour the gods and psych out the opposition. The rounds only last a couple of minutes each, but the bursts of energy are fast and furious. Contestants shove, slap, grapple or get a good belt grip to send their opponent flying from the ring.

The battle is fierce, as only those at the top of this profession get any financial rewards and success is far from guaranteed. As the higher-ranking wrestlers take to the ring, the seats fill up, the tension rises and the crowds, stocked up with copious amounts of food and drink, become increasingly rowdy.

I never actually made it to my seat, which I assume was way up in the gods, and, not knowing one wrestler from the next, did not wait to see who were that day's champions. Instead, I felt culturally sated, charged up for a Friday night in the bustling all-night bars of Shinjuku, and with a slightly clearer idea of what makes the Japanese tick.



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Trouble spots

Are you ready for the ultimate weekend away?

The enterprising tour operator Regent Holidays (0117-921 1711) this week launched the first-ever short break to the former Soviet republic of Georgia. A long weekend in the capital, Tbilisi, costs £723 including flights from Heathrow via Istanbul, accommodation and Georgian visa. So far there have been no takers. The current Foreign Office advice for Georgia says: "Visits by road to most parts of Georgia can be made in relative safety, although travel at night outside Tbilisi should be avoided if possible. There have been recent outbreaks of diphtheria in Georgia. Seek medical advice about precautionary measures before travelling."

True or false

The British Tourist Authority wants Tyneside to become a training ground for foreign lager louts.

True, at least according to the BTAs youth-oriented magazine, *UK The Guide*. As well as the usual warnings, eg not to bring illegal drugs into Britain, the *Guide* makes recommendations that could lead to some truly immoderate behaviour.

The magazine suggests an evening in Newcastle-upon-Tyne: "Saying that Georgies like a drink is like saying the Pope likes to say the occasional prayer." On an evening out with friends, the *Guide* advises, you could say "Why ye bugger man! I'm ganning doon toon to get mortal drink and fad some tottie." A *Geordie* phrase book is included, with handy lines such as "Hoy up – To be sick" and "Top tottie – Very desirable young lady". In the pub, you are warned to avoid dominoes ("the world's most boring game") and to steer clear of Vinito, which "Sounds like roller cleaner and doesn't taste much better".

Should the "tottie" idea go according to plan, a photograph of a condom machine is captioned with: "Fancy a quick one? There's more in the pub to try than beer and food, although some things may not be much use after 10 pints of beer."

Perhaps this is why Kevin Keegan decided to leave.



A likely story

"the year 2000 will begin right here – at the leading edge of the sixth Greenwich time signal beep" – The Independent, last Saturday.

Mike Perry of *Middlesex responds*: "I was surprised to read this in Simon Calder's article on Greenwich. I would have expected him to have noticed by now that half the world's time zones are ahead of GMT, so at the time of the aforementioned beep it will be lunchtime on 1 January, 2000, in, for example, New Zealand."

"What makes it even more surprising is that last year you printed an article about holiday companies that were offering tours to

various remote Pacific islands just west of the International Date Line, where the year 2000 really will begin, and when it will still only be midday on 31 December, 1999, in Greenwich."

Simon Calder replies: Mr Perry is right – but, I suggest, we both are. Space-time is defined from an arbitrary origin at the Royal Observatory. So I reckon Greenwich can cheerfully claim that an arbitrary date

marking an event approximately 2,000 years – and miles – away should start on the Greenwich Meridian, the arbitrary line through London SE10.

Mr Perry correctly points out that we carried a story last year on the Chatham Islands, one challenger for the place where 2000 will begin. But I bet that a pint of Spitfire, if available, will cost a lot more in the Chatham Islands than the present £1.60 at Hardy's Tavern on the Greenwich Meridian.

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The new Aer Lingus companion fare on flights from Stansted to Dublin is £109 for two, including tax – £54.50 per person. Better still, for only an extra £25 each, you can travel onwards to Cork, Galway, Kerry, Shannon or Sligo – and return from the same

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Fiona MacAulay visits the Roald Dahl Children's Gallery

Dangling from the ceiling in the atrium is the oddest chandelier, suspended from which are a hotchpotch of objects including a policeman's helmet, a tin of Spam and a truncheon. A verbal joke made visual. "What does a policeman have in his sandwiches? Truncheonment." Children are encouraged to look at things carefully and to think about words and their meanings – and jokes. Roald Dahl loved jokes.

Ascending the brightly coloured metal stairway to the upper floor, you enter the Imagination Gallery. On the door is a copy of the steel hip that Roald used as the handle to a filing cabinet drawer in his study. (This was his original false hip, which he had had replaced). In this room, illusion and reality intermingle. There are distorting mirrors and different contraptions

whether it was the room that was upside down, or themselves. Animated visuals on a computer screen explain how the eye sees things the wrong way up, which are then corrected by the brain. The refrain on this dip-in-dip-out programme is "Baffle your brains and boggle your eyes - Things are not always what they seem." The images back this up by showing how one thing can soon turn into something else. It is true Dadaisme philosophy.

The Roald Dahl Children's Gallery inspires inquisitiveness as well as fantasy and imagination. "Watch with glittering eyes the whole world around," said Dahl in *The Minpins*, "because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places."

The Roald Dahl Children's Gallery, Church Street, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire (01296 331441). Entrance fee £1.50. Open 10am-5pm weekdays and Saturday 2-5pm Sunday.

Ahigail Rayner

at a cost of £25 per child. For an unusual birthday treat, Playcave can offer exclusive use of the circuit and all facilities for one hour for up to 10 drivers. Full instruction and supervision are also provided. Parties are held on weekends and weekdays, at a cost of £125 per party. Individual test sessions are held on weekdays and cost £18 for 30 minutes or £30 for an hour, per child. Race overalls, crash helmets and gloves are provided but all children must be accompanied by an adult.

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Paths help to define the main lines of a design in a garden. They do not all need to be of the same importance. The main thoroughfares will perhaps be wide and surfaced with something hardwearing, but there may be an interconnecting web of narrow paths that are no more than beaten earth. You need to get the main lines of communication sorted out before you move on to the rest of the design for your plot.

A wide, swirling path leading from back door to compost bin may look good on paper as you doodle new garden designs inside in the warm. In practice, though, as you dash out into the rain with a load of potato peelings and a suppurating marrow, you will find that the shortest route is the one you will most often use, even if it involves a long jump over the border that you tastefully placed to shield the compost bin from view.

When the right lines have been drawn out for the paths, you need to think about the kinds of surfaces you want them to have. The most sympathetic coverings, in terms of looks and texture, will probably be the ones that also need most care and maintenance. If you do not like weeds, but hate weedkiller with an equal passion, then you had better start learning to love concrete.

Cost as well as taste has a bearing on the kind of materials you use to surface a path. The simplest and cheapest method is to leave them as beaten earth. The disadvantage of this is that you lose contrasts of colour and texture between paths and beds. And the paths get muddy after rain. On the plus side is the cost, which is nothing, and the fact that beaten earth paths can easily be rerouted when you feel like a change in the layout of the garden.

Straw is perhaps too rustic a material to use in a town garden, but in country gardens it treads down quickly to make friendly paths around vegetable plots, and sops up damp as usefully as a sponge. When it begins to look tacky, you rake it up, put it on the compost heap and replace it with a fresh layer.

Ground or chipped bark also needs regular topping up, but gives a dark, rich, chocolate-cake finish to paths, especially informal ones. If you already use composted bark to mulch beds, don't use it on paths as well. You will lose any sense of contrast between one area and another, and your garden will start to look like a demonstration plot for waste products of the timber industry. Lay sheets of black polythene under the bark if you want to cut down on weeding, but not if you like the idea of the bark itself slowly transmuting to soil.

The same general principles apply to gravel, which has the added attraction of sticking to the bottom of your shoes and then magically unsticking as soon as you walk back into the house. But it makes a satisfyingly crunchy noise when you walk on it. So much so that police forces recommend it as a burglar deterrent. Plants seed themselves happily into it. Bulbs such as scillas look charming growing through it. I like this effect, of things spilling from borders into paths. If you don't, put polythene sheeting under the top dressing of gravel.

Gravel has different colours and textures, depending on where it has come from. Some have a pinkish tinge. Others are soberly and almost uniformly grey. I like the ones that are predominantly cream. Stick to one kind, that tones with the colour and texture of the brick or stone of the buildings around you. For a serene, calming, Zen finish, rake the gravel in parallel lines with a wide-tined rake. Gravel can be used to eke out more expensive materials such as stone. Set paving slabs in an open pattern down the length of a path and fill in around them with gravel.

Hoggin is the term for a mixture of sand, gravel and pebbles that was often used in traditional kitchen gardens to provide a firm sur-

On the right track

Anna Pavord continues her series on gardening principles. This week: devising and keeping paths



Sissinghurst: some patterning of the path materials gives a better effect than total anarchy

PHOTO: NATIONAL TRUST/ERIC CRUICKSHANK

face for paths that had to stand up to heavy traffic. It must be properly rolled, so that the constituents bind together to make a hard, durable crust. The best hoggin paths are made with a "batter", a slightly humped profile, so that water is shed from the centre to run along gutters either side.

If as a covering you use bark or gravel, both of which kick about easily, you will probably need edgings for your paths to keep the stuff in place. Lengths of board make simple, unobtrusive edgings, and few skips are without planks that can be recycled like this. Keep them straight by bashing a few wooden pegs into the ground tight against them. Avoid rolls of corrugated plastic edging, which draws attention to itself without having the looks to warrant it.

If your paths are properly paved with stone or brick, you won't need fixed edgings and can rely on intertwined clumps of violas, daisies, alpine strawberries, pinks or petunias to keep

the earth of the borders where it should be. If you mulch beds every year (as you should – make a resolution now) the soil level gradually builds up. Then it is more prone to topple on to the paths. Plants provide better nets for catching it than planks of wood.

Old bricks make good paths if you happen to have them about. They have become extraordinarily expensive to buy. DIY experts start tutting in an irritating way if you use indoor bricks outside. Yes, they do sometimes flake in bad frosts, but they do not disintegrate entirely. I'd prefer to run that risk than live with the liverish, slightly shiny finish of what is called "engineering brick".

Similar to brick, but usually dark grey, dark blue or black, are stable pavours, which are criss-crossed over with an incised trellis pattern to stop horses slipping. It works for humans, too. These slabs make smart paths in minimalist city back yards.

Some of the best paths, such as those at Sissinghurst, the National Trust's famous garden in Kent, are made from a random selection of bricks, cobble and rubble. Some patterning of the materials – using bricks in threes, incorporating roundels made from bits of blue-and-white china, making parallel lines of cobbles down the sides – gives a better effect than total anarchy. The advantage of this kind of path is that it provides a home to all kinds of bits and pieces that you do not want to throw away.

The most unpleasant surface for paths is asphalt, though concrete runs a close second. Asphalt is just a touch more funereal. Laid on an uneven surface, both of them crack and become as lethal as they are ugly. If you have a path like this, abandon all thoughts of repairing it. Invite round a bunch of friends with pickaxes and grievances and let them work off their spleen on the hard core. Then cart it all off to the tip and start again.

Duff Hart-Davis There is little doubt that the Welsh hills have suffered the worst damage at the teeth of sheep



Whatever other ecological controversies may flare up in 1997, there is certain to be sharp debate about the decline of Britain's heather moors. *Crisis in the Hills*, the report recently published by the Wildlife Trusts, showed how excessive grazing by sheep has impoverished our upland habitat, and called for immediate reforms to arrest the downward trend.

Case studies range from Islay, off the west coast of Scotland, through Cumbria and the Peak District, to Wales. There is little doubt that the Welsh hills have suffered the worst damage at the teeth of sheep; and, according to the report, the main agent of destruction is the present system of subsidies, whereby hill farmers are paid £30 per breeding ewe per year, irrespective of the area on which the animals range.

The result is that sheep are far too numerous, and on many hills the vegetation is being eaten to death. Heather and other dwarf shrubs, such as bilberries, are dying out; wild flowers are vanishing; bracken (which is not only poisonous, but also harbours disease-bearing ticks) is taking over; and birds such as grouse, curlew, golden plover and merlin are disappearing.

The report contends that farmers, instead of being paid to destroy the countryside, should receive financial incentives to improve it. The most important recommendation is that the Government should switch from payments per head to payments per acre.

All this sounds like good sense. Yet many Welsh farmers are infuriated by the report, claiming that it grossly oversimplifies the problems – that, for instance, the decline in bird life is due largely to an increase in predators such as birds of prey, foxes and feral mink. The Wildlife Trusts (the farmers say) should address themselves to this problem, rather than bash away at shepherds.

I myself find it strange that the report makes no mention of the role played by the owners of grouse moors. Because grouse depend on healthy heather, private landowners who wish to run shoots spend fortunes on the active management of their land. Strips of old heather are burned every year to promote constant new growth, bracken is suppressed by cutting or spraying, and the control of predators benefits not only

game but other moorland birds as well.

No debate about the uplands can ignore the role of grouse-shooting. Grouse were abundant in Wales until the Twenties and Thirties, but now there are extremely few left. Sheep and predators have driven the game-birds out.

It so happens that in the annual competition for wild game conservation projects, organised by the champagne firm Laurent-Perrier, the first two awards this year have gone to estates with large expanses of heather. The winner was Garrobie, a 30,000-acre grouse moor and deer forest south of Loch Ness, whose owner, Charles Connell, has made valiant efforts to restore heather destroyed by overgrazing.

Seldom can there have been a better illustration of what happens to hill country when management lapses. At the turn of the century Garrobie was a highly productive grouse moor, but by the time Mr Connell bought the place in 1979 overstocking had reduced it to a poor sheep farm and an occasional deer forest, with scarcely a grouse to be seen.

Now, by a combination of predator control and habitat management, he has built it back, and last season it yielded 550 brace. His main aim has been to exclude sheep from large areas with electric fences, some of them powered by miniature windmills. The improvement of the vegetation within the barriers has been amazing.

Similarly spectacular results have been achieved at Abernethy, on Speyside, where the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has won Laurent Perrier's second prize for the management of its 34,000-acre reserve. There the main aim is to conserve and extend the ancient Caledonian pine forest, principally by reducing the red deer population from nearly 1,000, to 300.

With grazing pressure lifted, pine seedlings are no longer being mown off in infancy. The forest is gradually spreading, and the undergrowth of heather and bilberry has become noticeably more luxuriant. This has helped the population of black grouse – a threatened species – to increase threefold.

From every corner of Britain the message is the same: that heather has astonishing powers of recuperation, and can stage a comeback after lying dormant for 50 years. But an enlightened manager must give it that chance.



cuttings

Winkill Stones, 64 acres of rare limestone pavement in the Yorkshire Dales, have been saved from quarry owners' bulldozers. This follows the massive response to an appeal launched by Plantlife, a charity dedicated to conserving wild plants and their habitats. The appeal was led by television's star gardener, Geoff Hamilton, who died earlier this year. Since then, Plantlife has received thousands of contributions from fans in memory of Mr Hamilton.

The appeal has been so successful that Plantlife had money left over from the sum that it needed to

support the funds pledged by the National Heritage Lottery Fund to buy Winkill Stones. It intends to use the extra to create a wild flower meadow in Mr Hamilton's home county, Rutland.

National Lottery Funds will also be vital to restore Britain's first ever public park, Derby Arboretum, for future generations to enjoy. The arboretum, which lies at the centre of the city, was given to Derby in 1835 by Joseph Strutt, the owner of the local cotton mill. The park was designed and laid out by John Claudius Loudon, the horticulturist

and writer, who was the Geoff Hamilton of the mid-19th century. Many of the original features of Loudon's design still remain, miraculously unaltered.

Strutt laid down few precepts. The arboretum was to be a public garden, open free on two days a week (including Sunday) with a minimum charge on the other five days. Two lodges were to be included, one of which could be used as a public assembly room. Maintenance costs were to be kept as low as possible.

Loudon thought that the site's main disadvantage was its lack of a "distant prospect". There was "no

view beyond the grounds, worthy of being taken", he wrote at the time. His solution was to mould the ground into mounds up to 10 feet high to shut out what he didn't want to see.

At the time, this was a massive innovation and it remains an ideal way of getting round a problem that is rather worse now than it was in Loudon's time.

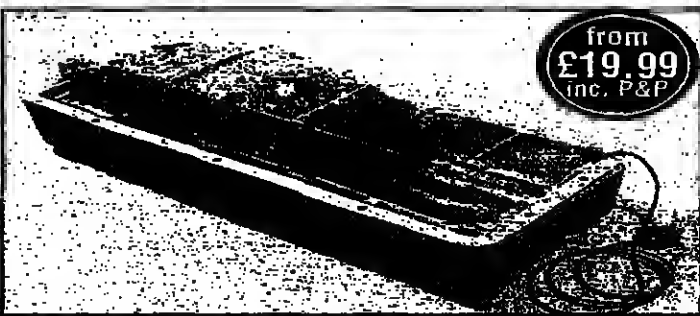
The City Council has appointed Glenn Anderson, landscape consultants, to find out from those who use the arboretum or live near it, how they feel it could be improved.

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all consuming

Bargain bytes galore

This month, why not invest in computers?
By Steve Homer

If Santa didn't bring you a computer for Christmas, now could be the ideal time to buy. Something like 30 per cent of all home computers are sold in the Christmas period. But after Boxing Day, prices start to tumble.

So what should you buy? The big choice is between a Macintosh, a Windows type computer or a games machine. Apple Macintoshes still have it over the Windows PC in terms of ease of use, so for the absolute novice there is significantly less software available for the Apple Macintosh. Packages operate more comfortably together, so, in theory, you should be more productive with the software you have.

The Windows PC can often feel a bit kludgy. Even with a powerful Pentium machine, a piece of modern software may take a while to "load", and 10 seconds can seem an eternity.

However, the range of software for the PC is stunning. Educational packages such as Microsoft's Encarta encyclopedia; Maris's Red Shift II which helps you explore the galaxy; Notting Hill's wonderful Art of Singing; there

are thousands of titles to choose from. As for games, there is everything from a package to help three-year-olds count, to a game that allows 17-year-olds to eviscerate monsters. Don't assume games are only for kids. There are plenty of engrossing titles that adults will enjoy.

One thing that should make buying a PC even more attractive now is that a new technology is just coming in. MMX is a new type of add-on to existing computer chips that allows multimedia applications, such as video, to play better. But there are few games and other applications that will really take advantage of this new technology. If you mainly want to use a PC for word processing, spreadsheets and the like, the MMX will be of no use. Even for games, MMX is not likely to be worth bothering with until games specifically written for it appear.

If you really enjoy getting your aggression out on imaginary characters on the screen, then perhaps you should consider a games machine. This Christmas the Sony Playstation and the Sega Saturn continued their war to the death. According to

Computer Trade Weekly, Sony outsold Sega by at least six to one this Christmas. However, they are both excellent games machines, now on sale for around £200, compared with £800-£1,200 for a good multimedia PC.

Not all the Playstation and Saturn games involve you killing things. Race games look good, too. Of course, what is missing are worthy titles. There really are no encyclopedias, language courses or design packages for the Saturn or the Playstation. These are machines built for one thing: fun!

If you know someone who already has a computer there is one cost-effective late Christmas present they will love you for. For about £50 you can buy them some extra memory.

When you select a program on a computer screen, the program and associated data are loaded into memory. This so-called random access memory, or RAM, was very expensive. Most PCs sold today have 8-16Mb of memory. Last year very few machines were sold with 16 Mb, as it was just too expensive. Particularly with Windows 95, more memory equals faster performance. The good news is that memory is quite easy to

install and prices have never been lower. To buy an additional 8Mb of memory last year would have set you back more than £200. This year you can probably pay less than £60. All you have to do is note down the make and model of the machine and check with the manufacturer to see what type of memory you need. Armed with the model number and type of memory, ring round a few suppliers. Installing memory shouldn't take more than 10 minutes. If you are buying a new computer, don't be a skinflint. Make sure you have at least 16Mb in your machine. Most computers will install it for you if you buy it while you are buying your computer.

There are still companies selling computers with only 8Mb of memory. Avoid them like the plague. Ideally, go for 24Mb or more. Finally, if you are buying, make sure of after-sales support. Most computers will function well for several years, but if they break down it can be a major headache. Check to see whether the engineer will be coming out to you, or you will have to take the machine to some repair centre. Check how long the warranty lasts. And if you have a

problem, is there a number you can ring? If so, how long after buying the computer can you use it, and will it be a premium rate call? You do not want to pay up to 65p a minute dealing with a problem that might be the manufacturer's fault. And if you plan to use your computer at home, check that technical support is available in the evenings and double-check on cover at weekends.

Also, telephone support for most software that is pre-installed on your machine may last 90 days or less. You may need to purchase extra support.

But don't let all this careful thinking put you off. For less than £1,000, if you shop around, you can buy the most amazing tool that the human race has ever had to play with. Accessing information around the world on the Internet, receiving and sending faxes and electronic mail, opening up windows of excitement on CD-Rom on everything from Beethoven to basketball, listening to music, perhaps even watching movies and television, controlling your home finances and writing that great novel: all this and more can be done on the average multimedia PC.



Is now the time to take the techno-plunge?

PHOTO: XXXXXX

Ordeal by chocolate

Under the counter
with Lyndsay Calder

I was only after I'd finally managed to dispatch my parents back over the Border 10 days after Christmas, that we plucked up courage to try the chocolate body paint.

I, too, had considered this over-hyped little stocking filler, but had rejected it on the grounds (practical, I know) that if I couldn't get muddy paw-prints out of my Egyptian cotton sheets, what the hell was I going to do with chocolate?

However, there it was now, nestling in the toe of my stocking along with the satsuma.

It was all terribly titillating at first - hee hee hee. But the chocolate emerged from the tube with the rapidity of year-old toothpaste, and in exceptionally unappealing thin strands reminiscent of Pringles or Polystyrene. It took some squeezing before any coverage at all could be achieved - he was blue in the face. He said he wished he hadn't been such a skinflint, and had bought the tub instead.

Charming. Things did seem to look up when the paintbrush came out, and the chocolate was spread and moulded in caressing strokes over my body. However,

instead of moans of pleasure, he was gleefully breathing, "Hah - rag-rolling! And look! tortoise-shelling!"

Any hint of eroticism I might have hoped for died as I looked down at this DIY freak having his way with me in a Paint Technique Frenzy.

Suddenly his mind moved on to other things and he claimed to have reproduced a silhouette of Brian Lara executing a perfect off-drive, then asked me to wiggle from left to right to see if we could produce a moving image of the shot.

Enough. "Look! I ordered, which didn't seem to release him from the field."

"Look! The least you could do is lick this off." This did attract his attention for a moment, and his tongue tentatively explored an area of chocolate, but then just stopped.

"What?" I said. "What's wrong?" "It's too sweet," he said, "I only like dark chocolate, love."

I hate stocking fillers. Spencer & Fleetwood Chocolate Body Paint, 150g tube with brush, £3.99, from Knuts. 1 Russell Street, Covent Garden, London WC2 (0171-836 3117)

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One of Rover's surviving village-style dealerships, at Hampton in Middlesex. The company is proposing to slim down its network

PHOTOGRAPH: PETER MACDIARMID



Gavin Green

Cars with weak brands are endlessly advertised on TV, all trying to push some invariably mendacious message

Brand is the big motor industry buzz word. Most car makers now have brand managers whose sole job is to work out what the brand should be, and then single-mindedly reinforce it through marketing, advertising and PR.

Yet the majority of car makers have little or no brand identity. The exceptions are Mercedes-Benz (solid, well engineered, expensive), Volvo (safe, but so badly driven you pity every other poor sod on the road), BMW (flash, German, driven by image-conscious thrusters in a hurry), Rolls-Royce (regal, if now a touch vulgar), Jaguar (gentlemanly, mature), Ferrari (sexy, fast) and Porsche (flash, fast). Of the mass makers, only Volkswagen has a consistently strong brand (well-made, won't let you down). These are strong brands because, by and large, they accurately reflect the product and have done so for many years, reinforced by suitable promotion.

Weak brands are those artificially fabricated by some highly paid marketing consultant or ad agency, and then foisted on an ill-informed brand manager, usually to promote a wholly unexceptional car.

Cars with weak brands are those endlessly being advertised on TV, all trying to push some meaningless and invariably mendacious message. Ninety-five per cent of car ads fall into this category.

Despite the intentions of the brand manager and the ad agency, they will usually fail to build a brand because their message bears no relationship with reality. Rover (ex-slogan: "Above all, it's a Rover") has no brand value partly because that slogan was nonsensical. Underneath, Rovers are Hondas. More important, the cars Rover makes today are nothing like the cars it made 20 years ago, when it did have a strong brand (comfortable, strong, genteel). It will take many years for BMW, Rover's new owner, to correct this.

And BMW, expert at brand management, knows it. Vauxhall is another maker with no image - partly because its slogans are silly. How can the Vectra be a car for the next millennium when it's so ordinary in this one? It is also because Vauxhall, as a

car maker, stands for nothing. Its cars have been consistently unexceptional.

One reason for car makers becoming brand obsessed is that as cars become more mechanically similar, so their brand identities become more important as buying differentiators. Nowadays, there is virtually no difference in engineering quality between a Nissan and a Citroën and a Peugeot and a Fiat (or, for that matter, a Renault and a Ford and a Vauxhall). They are virtually mechanical clones. So their badges, and all they stand for, matter more and more.

Even some manufacturers who do genuinely offer distinctive products are moving to the middle ground of mediocrity. They, too, have to reduce costs and now borrow manufacturing methods and components used by their less distinctive but frequently more cost-efficient rivals. Mercedes cars, although still the world's best built, are not as exceptionally solid as they were a decade or so ago, because they are increasingly being manufactured like Fords and Renaults and Nissans. The latest and fine VW Polo, although still better made than any rival, is not as tough as an old Golf.

In terms of product, the biggest difference between cars is now in their style. A few distinctive shapes are starting to pepper the roads after years of same-old styling - notably from Fiat, Ford, Audi and Renault. Good car designers are now being lauded like the fashion couture kings. Like clothes designers, they are asked to put sex appeal and emotion into goods which, materially, are much the same as the rivals.

When people at parties find out what I do, they invariably ask me what sort of car they should buy. Years ago, when cars were more mechanically distinctive, I would answer their questions at length. Now, I simply ask which car they fancy (which is invariably a car that appeals - usually on the basis of style and brand). As long as there is a dealer close by, as long as it is not East European, Korean or Malaysian (although new Skodas and new Hyundais are fine) whose cars really are still technologically a decade behind, then I advise them to buy it. They are rarely disappointed.

Where have all the dealers gone?

... to huge retail parks, as James Ruppert finds out

Station Garage, at Topsham, near Exeter, recently ceased to be a Skoda dealer. "After 25 years, it came as a bit of a blow," says the former proprietor, Mike Commis. "Selling Skodas was never easy, but it was a way of life for us. Skoda did everything by the book when it came to termination, but it was just a bit heavy-handed."

Station Garage is not alone. It is one of many Skoda dealers being pruned from the nationwide network. This is part of a trend sweeping through the motor industry as manufacturers seek to exercise more control over the way their cars are sold. What it all boils down to is that your local dealer may not be so local in the near future. Servicing parts and sales are increasingly becoming a regional phenomenon. For rural motorists in particular, popping down to a small, friendly, local outlet a few miles away is proving increasingly difficult. Manufacturers want you to visit a huge, impersonal, business park site.

In Yorkshire, for instance, the number of Volvo dealers is just three, catering for one huge territory, whilst Rover has expressed its intention to cull up to 30 per cent - around 160 sites - of its existing 511 dealers. According to the motor industry analysts Sewells, UK car dealership numbers as a whole will drop by as much as 40 per cent over the next 10 years. The signs are that car makers are expanding the territories of larger

dealers at the expense of smaller ones. Remember the corner shop? Replaced by the big, bland, corporate supermarket. Something similar is happening in the motor trade.

Once upon a time there was an Austin Morris dealership down every high street. It explained the big sales and huge loyalty enjoyed by the home marque, but during the rationalised British Leyland era, the small outlets were cut back. "That's what happened to this site 25 years ago," says Mike Commis. "So we decided to sell Skodas... now the same thing has happened again, and this time we are striking out on our own."

When it comes to innovative ways of marketing cars, the Daewoo has been remarkably successful - making much of the fact that they are cutting out the dealer completely and are selling direct to the customer. In the first year of trading the company sold 18,000 cars in the UK, and has taken around a 1 per cent share of the new car market.

Meanwhile, Kevin Jones at Rover does not see a problem with his company's proposals to slim down the network. "This is not a cut-and-slash policy, but a businesslike approach that will ensure the network's future. Essentially every dealer has to justify his or her existence, and clearly one that is not selling a good mix of cars, or operating profitably, won't survive. Take the specialist MGF, for instance: we appointed just 125 dealers to sell that marque because it would not

have been viable for all 500 to have sold a sports car. We would like nothing more than a Rover dealer in every town, but that is not possible in today's environment. However, as cars are less dependent on servicing, it makes sense to concentrate our activities over a wider area."

Dealers are fighting back. A highly publicised case last July involved Harry Wake, a Lincoln Renault dealer, who had his franchise cancelled when Renault UK said the premises were inadequate and wanted them replaced by a green field site run by another dealer. The judge ruled in favour of Mr Wake, who can now trade until 2002 as a Renault dealer, because there was a verbal agreement between the parties after Mr Wake rescued the company and invested £75,000. The judge saw Renault UK's actions of backing out of an agreement not to terminate so long as Wake was in charge as "deeply unattractive... making a mockery of the manufacturer's fine words about partnership with its dealers."

However, this ruling does not alter a manufacturer's right to dump a dealer without notice, even though copycat cases to test the legal precedent set by the case were threatened. It all turned on the existence of a verbal assurance which was construed (backed up by Renault UK's internal documents) as a binding contract. Clearly, manufacturers will have to be careful what they say to dealers. A sales manager told me: "their guys

from head office were quite open; they want to put dealers on huge retail parks. They argued that customers flock to the out-of-town superstores, such as MFI. But I argued they don't all need to take their flat-packed furniture back to be serviced, do they?"

Prime movers behind the big-is-best movement were the multiple dealer groups, which account for 50 per cent of the UK car trade. However, the biggest of all, Lex Retail, maintains that a leaner operation is a more efficient and profitable one. According to Malcolm Harbour of Solihull-based motor industry analysts Harbour Wade Brown, "large dealer groups may identify new opportunities by concentrating their efforts in market niches, or by developing a strong regional base."

One of the most remarkable indications that this is happening is the announcement that the Chesterfield-based Pendragon Group has been awarded the Fiat and Alfa Romeo franchises for the entire territory within the M25, an area that accounts for 10 per cent of Fiat Group sales. This two-year scheme will see Pendragon develop 15 retail sites with three more after-sales service centres. Fiat's Peter Newton refuted the suggestion that this amounted to a cartel. "This enlarged territory approach is not a strategy that will be applied countrywide. It suits the metropolitan area, provides economies of scale and will result in better customer service.

Overall we operate and believe in a balanced network with everything from small, family-run outlets to public companies."

In theory you can shop around for your next car, but all dealers operate on a postcode basis and are supposed to draw their customers from that area. BMW and Porsche franchises are just two of the more strict prestige marques who could refuse to sell you a car if your postcode does not fit. But should you be forced to buy from a dealer you don't like, or who offers the worst buying package?

There are signs that some dealers are turning away from the franchise system and becoming masters of their own destiny. Inverness dealer Norman Cordner recently sold their Ford franchise to become a nearly-new car specialist. They have turned their three-acre site into a "Motor Mall", and they are combining it with a fast fit, service, accident repair and rental operations. "We felt that as a family firm we should become fully independent to expand down our chosen route," a representative remarked.

At newly independent Station Garage, Mike Commis was relieved. "You can't make a small franchise pay these days: the margins are tiny and then there are all the costs of signage and promotion. Sometimes the Skoda sign put customers off. Our used-car operation is thriving. Breaking away from the franchise system has given us a new lease of life."

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Since I first wrote six months ago about the new stockpicking formula devised by Jim Slater, his record has continued to impress. His methodology, readers may recall, is based on analysing so-called "Peg factors", which represent the ratio between the prospective price/earnings ratio of a share and its forecast earnings growth in the future.

Although Mr Slater has since added some important filters to refine his method (of which more anon), the basic principle is that a low Peg - ideally one below 0.75 - is the primary signal that a share may be worth buying. Essentially, the idea is to pick out fast growing companies whose growth potential is not yet fully valued in the market.

Come the new year and it is possible to take a fresh look at how his approach has performed. One advantage of his high profile methods is that it does at least allow others to judge how well he has marked his and their card.

The eight new year tips he selected in January 1995, for example, would have returned around 40 per cent to anyone who bought them all at the



Jonathan Davis

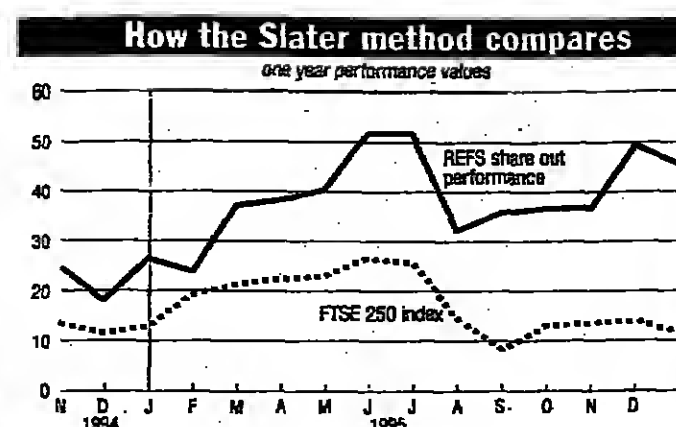
start of 1995 - some three times the return of the market as a whole. Meanwhile, Johnson Fry Slater Growth, the unit trust managed by his son Mark, which also broadly follows the Peg methodology, was the best performing fund in its sector last year, with the units rising in value by almost the same amount.

So these are unquestionably "hot hands" we are talking about. Not surprisingly, the book which outlines Mr

Slater's methods, *Beyond the Zulu Principle*, is also selling well. Deservedly so, since it is a clear and well-presented summary of a method which will appeal to those private investors who like to see strong action from their share portfolio. It should declare an interest here: Mr Slater was helped in the editing of the book by my *Independent* colleague, Tom Stevenson.

Equally unsurprisingly, the book has had mostly muted reviews from the papers and in academia - no doubt because the name still resonates with memories of the collapse of Slater Walker all those years ago. But what is interesting is how little attention has so far been paid to the methodology itself, which is genuinely innovative in UK terms. It is worth emphasising that the Peg system as Mr Slater has now refined it is much more sophisticated and securely based than the one he outlined in his first book about share selection, *The Zulu Principle*, a few years ago.

While Peg factors remain the primary screening factor, the other criteria he has now added represent a considerable tightening of the orig-



inal selection process. By adding the requirements that cash flow should exceed earnings over one and five years, and insisting on relative strength against the market over the previous one, three and 12 months, the new methodology intentionally seeks to eliminate many of the spivier stocks that have caught out unwary growth stock investors in the past.

Mr Slater himself emphasises that

the system is not mechanical: investors have to use their own judgement in deciding when and where to override the criteria. One consequence of the more rigorous criteria he now adopts is that they tend to throw up only a limited number of shares at any one time - typically 20-30 or so, sometimes fewer, out of 2,400 or so listed companies.

Many of these are small companies. It is rare for the Peg screening

system to produce large Footsie companies. They are usually too big to grow fast and too well researched to be seriously undervalued, though some such as Forte (before the takeover by Granada) and British Aerospace have crept through the net at times in the last 18 months.

So can one argue with these impressive results? Well, of course it is early days. The system has only been tested for 18 months. It has yet to be tested in a bear market. The kind of shares that Peg factors tend to throw up are relatively small companies in fast growing sectors such as media, computer services and leisure. Concept retail stocks have been regular features: Blacks Leisure, for example, was the best performing share Slater picked last year. JJB Sports is another classic Peg stock - a successful retailing formula which is now being rapidly expanded across the country. In computer systems, Farfly - a firm which provides training and consultancy to industrial and other users - has been one of the best performers.

While it continues to grow, this kind of share often produces a sparkling performance. But what

happens when the market or the economy turns down? One has to think that this kind of share could be particularly vulnerable. The earnings tend to evaporate and the company finds itself with tons of unwanted stock and scores of rapidly emptying retail premises. The market in shares of this size may become dangerously thin. Slater himself acknowledges all these possibilities, though he says that he is now learning to use his statistical screening service, REFS, to pick up warning signals about some of the impending problems before they occur.

Anyone who follows Mr Slater's methods should therefore expect to be taking on some additional risk (at least viewed from an ex-post standpoint), even with the added cash flow and relative strength filters. These are not shares to put away and forget about. But that is no reason for grown adults not to look at the system to see if it suits them. After all, the great charm of stock market investing is precisely that it allows you to take as much risk as you feel comfortable with. The only real sin is to take on more risk than you need without realising it.

Banking on the value of sterling

Clifford German on foreign currency accounts

Having a bank account in dollars or some other foreign currency is one of the marks of the successful *homme* or *femme d'affaires* just as surely as a Rolex watch or a Gucci bag. It conveys an aura of sophistication and worldly wisdom, and easy familiarity with life and work abroad.

It can also be useful, for paying bills and drawing cash abroad and receiving payment in cash and cheques expressed in foreign currencies, without the tiresome and costly business of buying and selling foreign currency for every transaction.

More often than not, owning a foreign currency account has enabled account-holders to impress their friends with talk of successfully hedging themselves against a depreciating pound. But it does not always work that way.

The unexpected strength of sterling against the dollar, the mark, the yen and other traditional "hard" currencies has drastically reduced the value of money in foreign currency accounts held by UK investors in the last year or so by anything up to 25 per cent.

This trend could have some way to run because the pound is still strengthening in anticipation of increases in UK interest rates this year. Travel agent Thomas Cook is tipping the pound to reach \$1.78, 8.85 French francs and 230 pesetas before the end of the year. Some experts think sterling could go even higher, which would further increase paper losses for UK residents holding accounts in foreign currencies.

But all trends come to an end and the time will surely



come for shrewd investors to ride the return of the pendulum and make money on a bank account in foreign currency.

Holding hard currencies like dollars, marks and yen has, after all, been the right thing to do for most of the past half century, and it has been entirely legal ever since the whole structure of exchange controls was imperiously swept away by Mrs Thatcher and Sir Geoffrey Howe in the first few months of the new Conservative government 17 years ago.

Since then anyone with a few pounds to spare could open a bank account in foreign currencies either with a UK or foreign bank in the country of origin, or in offshore banking locations like the Channel Islands, the Cayman Islands, or the Bahamas. Even that was not strictly necessary when UK and foreign banks in London began offering investors the chance to open foreign cur-

rency accounts without even going abroad. Most UK and foreign banks in London will open accounts in a range of currencies.

But small investors may find that the image is less glamorous than the reality. Current accounts offer a cheque book and are ideal for paying bills and banking rent on foreign property, although if this is what you want it for, you need to be sure the bank you open your account with has a correspondent relationship with the bank your counterparty uses abroad.

In particular, if you want an account in one of the lesser currencies like escudos or drachmas it might be best to open an account with a bank which has branches in the UK and in the country whose currency you choose.

Most banks want a minimum balance of around \$3,000 or the equivalent in other currencies, to operate the account without charge. For that you will not be

expecting any interest. But if you choose a bank which will give you a cheque book and cash card, you can draw currency from your account whenever and wherever you are travelling in your chosen currency area, and if you make a lot of transfers it can still work out cheaper than buying and selling small sums of currency to meet each transaction.

It is also a valid alternative to using your credit card, which still leaves you open to unfavourable exchange rates when your account is debited.

For the same sort of sum you can open a short-term deposit account which will earn some interest. But to get a reasonable return you need something like \$10,000 and to tie it up for up to six months.

It is important not to get carried away by the rates on foreign currencies which appear in most financial market reports. These refer to big sums in excess of £1m-worth of currency.

Even now UK retail investors will be lucky to get 3 per cent on a US dollar account tied up for a year, 2 per cent on a Deutschmark account, 1-2 per cent on Swiss francs and less than 1 per cent in yen, compared with up to 6 per cent in sterling.

You will also have to buy the foreign currency to put in the account. That could swallow 6-8 per cent of the capital. If you are not deterred, almost any bank in the UK will open a currency account for you. In the UK or the Channel Islands or in the currency area you choose.

But you will usually do best with a bank with branches here and abroad, like Citibank for dollar accounts.

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Help me out of this trap

Adviser Bryan Fisher considers a reader's double-edged problem

Q: In the light of current press speculation over plans to run down the state earnings related pension scheme (Serps) I began considering my own position.

My problem is twofold - negative equity and inadequate pension provision. At 41 I am anxious to get my financial situation sorted. The pension I currently have has been in place for four years, I contribute £50 per month to it and I have contracted out of Serps.

In addition, my flat has negative equity of around £17,000. I have a personal loan taken out to cover the cost of recent refurbishment and now on top of this the freeholder has advised that all tenants must pay around £3,000 to cover the cost of general maintenance.

My flat is currently valued at around £39,000. I am concerned that the flat won't appreciate sufficiently to justify me hanging on to it, but I am trapped. I cannot see a way out given my negative equity, current and projected outgoings and inadequate pension provision. Can you help?

A: I believe you have every reason to be concerned about the future of Serps. In principle it was a good idea. However, because

of escalating costs it is unlikely to be sustained for ever.

You have contracted out of Serps which, I assume from the information given, was four years ago when you took out the personal pension, which appears to be the right decision. Contracting out is not a once in a lifetime decision, however. As with most financial planning matters it will require reviewing regularly.

Now is the best time to increase your pension contributions. With 19 years to go until your 60th birthday the compound growth on your early contributions will be far more valuable than the growth can possibly be on the last few years' premiums. It is therefore essential that you attempt to maximise the level of your investment as soon as you can. Whether this investment is into your existing plan or another is impossible to advise on without analysing the particulars of your present policy.

At the age of 41 you are allowed to contribute 20 per cent of your income into a Personal Pension Plan and receive tax relief at your highest rate payable. For example, on a salary of £25,000 per annum your maximum gross investment would be £5,000 per annum or £416.66 monthly. As an employee you will receive basic

rate tax relief and the "net cost" to you would be £316.66, in the current tax year. Your current investment of £50 per month equates to an investment of just 2.4 per cent of your salary which, even with strong investment performance, is unlikely to provide you with the level of retirement income you would want.

On the property front I do not think you should be too concerned about the negative equity in your flat. Property prices are rising faster than at any time since the peak of 1989, with London and the South-east leading the way.

I would be concerned by the "general maintenance" bill you are likely to receive. You do not mention what advice you have already taken on this, but I would strongly suggest before entering into any money that the tenants collectively seek legal advice.

You may wish to consider the possibility of switching to an existing interest-only mortgage at once. This will then mean that part of your monthly payment pays off capital which will have the effect of reducing your negative equity with every payment you make. The only problem may be whether the building society will allow this. Currently they will

have a legal charge on the property and the endowment policy you have.

You will need to obtain a surrender value for your endowment from the insurance company. As you have negative equity the building society may wish to reduce the outstanding balance with this surrender money. Therefore you will need to ask the Building Society first of all whether this switch is possible and secondly check the monthly cost to make sure the repayments are not excessively expensive. This will depend on several factors such as the outstanding term of the mortgage which was not given.

Overall, according to your income/expenditure analysis you appear to have surplus funds which, if the appropriate steps are taken over the next few years, should put you into a much stronger position financially.

Bryan Fisher is an independent financial adviser and the financial planning manager at Berkeley Financial Planning in Coventry. Readers are invited to write to him at The Independent. Letters should not exceed 250 words. The advice is for guidance only and no action should be taken without receiving specific and professional advice.

Give to charity but keep your options open

Clifford German examines new schemes that allow more flexibility in donating money

Many people would like to give money to charity but are worried about possibly finding themselves short of income and capital to meet their own financial needs.

In an attempt to meet this genuine worry the Charities Insurance Association has devised a new method of giving which allows donors the opportunity of drawing a tax-free income of 5 per cent for their own use, and if they do need to do so they can reclaim the capital in full.

Readers who would like a free information pack should call 01622 606355. The new plan is called Legacy Enhancement and the bequest is invested in a with-profits invest-

ment bond managed by Legal & General.

The investor can draw 5 per cent from the bond tax-free, while the charity can keep the remaining income and also knows it has a likely future bequest which helps it plan its own future finances. Investors can, however, elect to leave all the income to roll-up in the fund and increase the future value of the bequest.

A third option allows the investor to draw the income and then covenant it to the charity, a fourth alternative allows the investor to use the income to buy a life assurance policy which can be assigned to the charity and increases the eventual pay-out when the donor eventually dies.

Exactly how much depends on the donor's age and life expectancy, but a 65-year-old woman could more than double the value of the original bequest.

Investors can also make monthly contributions to buy a life assurance policy out of income without actually committing a lump sum at all.

New ways of encouraging bequests to charities are more necessary than ever because the calls on their resources continue to increase while all but a handful of high profile charities have seen their annual incomes shrink in the last two years because potential givers think the National Lottery is looking after them.

In fact most charities are net losers from the lottery, and urgently need to tap streams of cash and concern.

Charities do have tax-exempt status, which means they do not pay income tax on the income they generate and they can claim tax rebates on gifts which individuals have made out of taxed income provided the donors sign a covenant to make annual donations for five consecutive years.

So if a top-rate taxpayer pays £60 a year into the scheme, the charity gets £40 from the taxman.

But many donors are reluctant to make a five-year commitment in case they are unable to keep it up.

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*Estimated gross redemption yield at 18.12.96. (gross running yield 7.6%). The value of investments, and any income from them, can fall as well as rise and you may not get back the full amount you invested. Part or all of the annual management charge may be paid out of capital - while this will enhance the income distributed it may constrain capital growth. Tax concessions can change and their value will depend on your circumstances. Save & Prosper Group Limited is regulated by the Financial Services Authority and IMRO. We only advise on products and services offered by the Fleming and Save & Prosper Marketing Group.

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So that we may call and offer further information.

1813/009

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This new fund will invest in a portfolio of shares and aims to provide a high and growing income as well as good capital growth over time.

PEP investors will have a choice of investing, either to achieve a yield above 5%* or, for those investors willing to take higher risk, to achieve a yield of over 6%*.

There will be no initial charge and no withdrawal fee.

This new fund will give you the opportunity to invest your tax free PEP allowance for both the current tax year and for the 1997/98 tax year - a total tax free investment of up to £12,000.

After the initial offer period there will be a spread between the buying and selling prices.

To: The M&G Group, Bristol BS38 7ET. Please send me a free copy of the new M&G Handbook and details of the new M&G Investment Trust.

NO SALESMAN WILL CALL.

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POSTCODE		KE-BEAB

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*Yields are based on investment within the M&G PEP and forecast as at 31.12.96 and are subject to change.

The M&G PEP

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By Clifford German

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Photograph: Andrew Buurman

So we signed over our home to the bank

As orders flooded in, two knitwear entrepreneurs chose the wrong way to raise funds

My biggest mistake

Patrick and Jane Goutelier, both 45, are partners in the Artwork knitwear brand, with outlets such as Harvey Nichols, Fenwick, Liberty and Whistles. They met as post-graduates at the Central School of Art in 1975. Their knitwear is now sold in 15 countries including the US and Japan, and as design consultants their clients include Marks & Spencer, Shanghai Tang and Dewhurst Lurie.

"Jane and I started our own business largely because we were unemployed. Neither of us were corporate people, though we did try having proper jobs. After college, Jane joined the BBC's costume department while I went to work for Marks & Spencer, but within 18 months we realised that we'd only be happy working for ourselves."

Our big break came in 1977 when one of our customers asked if we could turn our hands to producing original sweaters by updating the traditional Fair Isle design. That led to orders from the fledgling fashion chain Whistles and from Macy's in New York.

The only problem was that we didn't have any money; we were living from hand to mouth. We could afford to buy the yarn for couple of dozen sweaters, but with serious orders coming in we had a cash-flow crisis. By this time we were living in a house in

London's East End which we had managed to acquire for the princely sum of £8,250. It needed a lot of renovation, but we managed to get a grant to do it up. Around the same time we exhibited at our first trade fair, which was in New York. We were realistic about what we could take on in terms of production, and by lunchtime on the first day we had so many orders that we were forced to close our books. We felt that we'd already bitten off more than we could chew; somehow we had to find a way of raising enough money to buy the yarn and pay the knitters.

Our bank manager, we thought at the time, was great. He said words to the effect of: 'You've got a house... property's doing really well... sign this bit of paper and we'll give you an overdraft.' But in reality, that overdraft was not based on the size of our order book, the quality of our customers, our ability to manage the business or to manufacture the goods. It was based solely on his belief that there was good equity in our home. We made our first mistake at that trade

fair. If we had only kept our order book open for the full three days we probably could have got enough customers to pay in advance to finance all of the production costs. We wouldn't have needed to sign our house over to the bank, which, of course, was our biggest mistake.

Our business grew rapidly throughout the Eighties, and since property prices continued to rise, we always had enough collateral to fund our increasing costs. We had great press coverage, we sold to the best shops throughout the world, our turnover was getting bigger every year and we were able to earn a living.

Profit, as a separate entity, was not something that we had ever considered to be a requirement, and nor did the bank. But in 1990, property prices plunged and our bank, like many others, panicked.

The manager responded by transferring two thirds of our overdraft to a short-term loan. 'Restructuring your finances' was the euphemism used. Ironically, our order book was still booming and we appeared to be doing incredibly well. We felt he had found a way of being able to help us finance the production costs. Looking back, I don't think it's possible to be more naive.

In reality it meant that suddenly we were committed to enormous monthly repay-

ments. We kept thinking we had the money to pay the bills, but we didn't, because it had already been deducted by the bank. And we weren't generating enough profit to finance that sort of drain on our working capital.

We didn't just owe money to the bank; we'd built a business with a turnover of £1.5m which employed 1,200 knitters and we owed money to them as well. Our order book, which represented our income for the next six months, was nowhere near what we needed, and we were forced to call in the receivers with the result that we lost our home.

These days we stick to what we're good at, which is designing. We don't attempt to finance the production costs; we have a trade finance company for that, using the customers' orders as collateral. Next year our turnover will be more than £1m again, and, while we still don't have our own home, at least the knitters have been paid what they were owed.

The most important lesson is you should never, under any circumstances, put your house up as equity to raise money for your business. If anyone advises you to do it, sack them, because if the business is sound, there are options that don't involve risking your home."

Patrick and Jane Goutelier were talking to Corinne Sincovec.

Deciphering pensions

By Clifford German

Pension providers are gradually making themselves more user-friendly, but altogether too slowly. The second annual report of the Personal Investment Authority this week condemns many of the traditional providers for failing to reduce the charges they levy on personal pensions. A handful have reduced their charges in the last two years, but they are mostly companies whose performance has been exposed as sub-standard and who are not attracting the share of new business they need.

But they are being matched by a number of successful performers who have taken advantage of better disclosure of rivals' charges to raise their own towards the industry average. Some providers are also refusing to cut charges on pensions sold through low-cost outlets.

Although pension providers have, by and large, complied with the requirements to publish their charges and to show how much charges will reduce the value of a pension fund over 20 or 30 years (the figures will make your hair curl), they are still wrapping the true meaning up in concepts that the average punter does not understand. "Reduction in yield", for example, is the jargon word for the percentage by which the fund's value is reduced by charges over its lifetime, but the concept is rarely explained to the layman.

In any case, the reduction is less important than the actual yield before and after charges, and that can only be illustrated by guestimates of a constant increase, conventionally 6, 9 and 12 per cent a year in the value of the fund.

But that does not mean that no progress is being made. Eagle Star this week started selling no-frills, low-cost personal pension plans by telephone in direct competition with Virgin

Direct and Scottish Widows. The premiums are invested in full with no deductions, there are no initial charges, the management charges are just £2 a month plus 1 per cent of the fund, and unlike Virgin the funds are actively managed. But Eagle Star's unique selling point is the promise to refund all fees and charges in full and to transfer the current value of the fund in full if investors become dissatisfied during two years.

Edinburgh-based fund manager Ivory & Sime has launched a pension scheme investing in investment trusts and marketed exclusively through independent financial advisers. Contributions to pensions based on investment trusts are invested in full instead of being subjected to the bid/offer spreads which discourage many people from investing in unit trust-based pension funds. Investors who take out an I&S pension will pay their advisers for advice but they can negotiate commission rebates. The plan will offer flexibility to raise or lower contributions, take contribution breaks or take early retirement, all without penalties.

Abbey Life has also made a gesture towards improved information for potential buyers, aimed at the 30 per cent of the working population who have no private pension plans and the 35 per cent who contribute £50 a month or less. Almost half the population thinks £50 a month would buy a 30-year-old an adequate pension, against a true figure of £250 a month. Abbey Life is offering the first 500 Independent readers who apply a free computer disk or a ready reckoner for those who have no computer, which will show them how much they need to set aside. Call Abbey Life on 0800 202040 and specify disk or ready reckoner.

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*Source: Micropal, on a bid to bid basis with gross income re-invested from 01.11.95 to 01.11.96, since launch. †This makes no allowance for any management charges which are applicable to a PEP but our charges would not significantly alter the performance disparity. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. Both capital and income values may go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount invested. Tax assumptions are those currently applicable and are subject to statutory change. The value of tax relief will depend on your individual circumstances. All comparisons of cost apply to PEPs investing wholly in unit trusts. Full written details are available on request. All statements are correct as at 01.11.96. For your protection calls will usually be recorded and randomly monitored. Legal & General (Direct) Limited, Registered in England No. 2702080. Registered Office: Temple Court, 11 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4N 4TP. Representative only of the Legal & General marketing group, members of which are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO for the purposes of recommending, advising on and selling life assurance and investment products bearing Legal & General's name.

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tal charge on the property and not policy, you have a need to obtain a surrender to endowment from the insurance company may wish to reduce the liability with this surrender now you will need to ask the bank for all whether this switch by secondly check the monthly on the repayments are not excessive. This will depend on several factors outstanding term of the mortgage not given.

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MORTGAGES					
Fixed rates					
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	0.95 for 1 year	85	0.75% —	1st 5 yrs: 6.03% of sum repaid
Coventry BS	0800 126125	4.90 to 1/1/99	85	£250 —	To 1/1/02: 6 mths interest
Bristol & West BS	0800 119955	6.99 to 1/1/01	90	£275 —	To 31/12/01: 6 mths interest
Variable rates					
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	0.75% for 1 year	90	— —	1st 5 yrs: 6.49% of sum repaid
Coventry BS	0800 126125	4.06% for 2 years	85	— —	1st 5 yrs: 6 mths interest
West Bromwich BS	0121 525 7070	5.10% for 3 years	75	— —	1st 6 yrs: 6% of advance
First time buyers fixed rates					
Lambeth BS	0800 225221	5.20 to 1/3/99	95	295 —	1st 5 yrs: 6 mths interest
Bristol & West BS	0800 119955	6.49 to 1/1/00	90	£275 —	To 31/12/01: 6 mths interest
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	7.49 to 1/2/02	95	£395 —	1st 6 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
First time buyers variable rates					
Staffordshire BS	01902 317317	2.23 to 1/3/98	90	— —	1st 5 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
Greenwich BS	0181 858 8212	4.19% for 2 years	95	— —	1st 5 yrs: discount reclaimed
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	5.74% to 1/2/02	95	£295 Refund vain fee	1st 7 yrs: 5% of sum repaid

Telephone	APR %	Max LTV	Fixed monthly payments (£3,000 over 3 years)
Unsecured			
Northern Rock BS	0345 421421	12.9H	£112.66
Royal Bank of Scotland	0800 121125	14.0	£114.78
Nationwide BS	via local branch	14.9	£113.15
Secured (second charge)			
Chydebank Bank	0800 240024	7.8	£3K - £15K
Royal Bank of Scotland	0131 523 7023	9.0	£2.5K-£100K
Midland Bank	0800 494999	10.1	£5K-neg

Telephone	Account	% pm APR	% pm APR
OVERDRAFTS			
Woolwich BS	0800 400900	Current	0.84 10.5 2.18 29.5
Alliance & Leicester	0500 959595	Alliance	0.76 9.5 2.20 29.8
Bank of Scotland	0800 808805	Direct Cheque	— 11.0 — 26.5

Telephone	Card Type	Min. Income	Rate % pm	APR %	Annual Fee	Int. free period
CREDIT CARDS						
Standard						
Co-operative Bank	0800 109000	Advantage Visa	—	0.64N	7.90N	nil 0 days
Capital One Bank	0800 669000	Visa	—	0.797N	9.90N	nil 54 days
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 828024	Mastercard/Visa	—	0.9157	11.50	nil 0 days
Gold cards						
Co-operative Bank	0345 212212	Visa	£20,000	0.50	10.50	£120 46 days
RBS Advantage	0800 077770	Visa	£20,000	0.94N	11.90N	nil 56 days
Royal Bank of Scotland	01702 362890	Visa	£20,000	1.05N	14.50N	£35 46 days

Telephone	Payment by direct debit	Payment by other methods
STORE CARDS		
John Lewis	via store	1.39 18.0 1.39 18.0
Marks and Spencer	01244 681681	1.87 24.8 1.97 26.3
Sears	via store	1.94 25.9 2.20 29.8

APR: Annualised percentage rate. B-C Buildings and Contents Insurance LTV: Loan to value. ASU: Accident, sickness and unemployment. E: Available to comprehensive motor insurance policyholders aged over 22 years. H: Higher rate applies if insurance not arranged. I: Introductory rate for a limited period.

All rates subject to change without notice.

Source: MONEYFACTS 01852 500677

9 January 1997

Best savings rates

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
INSTANT ACCESS					
Portman BS	01202 292444	Instant Access	Instant	£100	4.70 Year
Bank of Scotland	0500 804804	Instant Access Savings	Instant	£5,000	5.13 Month
Bank of Scotland	0500 804804	Instant Access Savings	Instant	£10,000	5.50 Month
Direct Line	0181 667 1121	Instant Savings	Instant	£50,000	5.75 Year
INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS					
Teachers' BS	01202 887171	Bullion	Postal	£500	4.80 1/2 Year
Melton Mowbray BS	01664 480214	Postal Direct	Postal	£1,000	5.50 Year
Sun Banking Corporation	01438 744500	Direct Postal	Postal	£5,000	5.75 Year
Northern Rock BS	0500 505000	Select Instant	Postal	£5,000	6.25 Year
NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS					
Chelsea BS	0800 132351	POST-tel 20	20 day P	£5,000	6.05 Year
First National BS	01232 314050	High Yield	30 day	£25,000	6.45 Year
Northern Rock BS	0500 505000	Select 60	60 day P	£10,000	6.50 Year
Leeds & Helbeck BS	0113 225 7777	Postal Bonds	30/4/98 P	£10,000	7.00 Maturity
CHEQUE ACCOUNTS					
Widewest Bank	0800 317477	HICA	Instant	£2,500	5.20 Month
Investec Bank (UK)	0171 626 0879	HICA 5000	Instant	£5,000	5.25 Month
Halifax BS	01422 335333	Asset Reserve	Instant	£10,000	4.25 Quarter
Chelsea BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	4.50 Year
FIXED RATE BONDS					
Portman BS	0800 663663	Fixed Interest Bond	1 Year	£500	6.60F Maturity
Bristol & West BS	0800 202121	Year Plus Fixed Rate	1/5/98	£5,000	7.00F Maturity
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721	Fixed Rate Bond	2 Year	£50,000	7.05F Year
Coventry BS	0345 665522	Fixed Rate Bond	30/11/99	£1,000	7.30F Year
FIRST TESSAS					
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£8,575	7.50F Year
NatWest Bank	0800 200400	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£5,000	7.45F Year
Investec Bank (UK)	0171 626 0879	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.20 Year
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721	Inflation Beater	5 years	£1,000	7.00 Year
FOLLOW-ON TESSAS					
Sun Banking Corporation	01438 744505	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.50F Year
NatWest Bank	0800 200400	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£5,000	7.45F Year
Northern Rock BS	01372 747771	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.20 Year
West Bromwich BS	0990 143668	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£250	7.00 Year
GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (GIB)					
Financial Assurance	0181 380338	Financial Assurance	1 year	£5,000	5.30FN Year
Pininfarina Insurance	0181 207 9007	Pininfarina Insurance	2 year	£3,000	5.90FN Year
Hambro Assured	0800 838020	Hambro Assured	3 years	£20,000	6.05FN Year
Hambro Assured	0800 838020	Hambro Assured	4 years	£10,000	6.25FN Year
Hambro Assured	0800 838020	Hambro Assured	5 years	£50,000	6.45FN Year
OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (gross)					
Northern Rock Gibraltar	00 350 75168	Move Access	Instant	£25,000	6.30 Year
Northern Rock Guern	01481 714600	Offshore 30	30 day	£10,000	6.55 Year
Birmingham Midshires	01481 700680	Offshore Fixed	31/1/98	£5,000	6.85F Maturity
Northern Rock Guern	01481 714600	Millennium Bond	1/1/00	£10,000	7.50F Year
NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (gross)					
Investment Accounts		1 month	£20	4.75	Year
Income Bonds		3 months	£500	5.25	Year
Capital Bond		Series J	5 years	£100	6.65F Maturity
First Option Bonds		12 months	£1,000	6.00F	Year
Pensioners' G'ib Income Bond		Series 3	5 year	£500	6.25F Year
HS Certificates (tax-free)		43rd issue	5 year	£100	5.35F Maturity
Children's Bond		9th Index, linked	5 year	£100	2.50-2.81 Maturity
		Issue H	5 year	£25	6.75F Maturity

P: post only. F: fixed rate. M: net rate. All withdrawals subject to 30 day loss of interest. All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice.

Source: MONEYFACTS 01852 500677

9 January 1997

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WOOLWICH DIRECT

DAMIEN
THE LONDON CONTEMPORARY ART FAIR
DAMIEN, THERE BE MUCH HYPE BEING THE HIGH

Weather

berdeen	2	36	C
mplessey	2	36	C
elfast	2	36	C
irmingham	2	36	C
Blackpool	2	34	C
Bournemouth	2	36	C
Brighton	0	32	C
ristol	0	32	C

TO FIND OUT WHAT'S ON TV, WHERE TO GO AND WHEN, READ THE EYE TODAY

Whatever happened to...

Acid rain?

Remember?

Acid rain was going to cause the destruction of the human race. As it silently ate away at the cracks of British heritage, abroad it was destroying the rain forests and stealing our oxygen. 17 years ago this month, a report was released saying that acid rain is seriously contaminating Britain's lakes and rivers. Public and press combined to bring the problem to the attention of the politicians: a fuss was kicked up and action was supposedly taken. But has this had any effect?

What is acid rain?

For a long time it was thought that it was caused simply by the sulphur dioxide emissions resulting from the burning of coal. But this may not be the most important cause after all and over the last few years, nitrous oxides have been increasingly blamed.

57 million Britons sweat and exhaled between 2,500 and 14,000 tonnes of ammonia every year. This is as potent an air pollutant as other chemicals that are produced when fuels are burnt.

The casualties

In July last year, acid rain was blamed for causing £30,000 damage to 50 classic cars at a rally in the Borders. Carnbridge's focal point, the 550-year-old King's College Chapel, is also being gnawed away by the contaminated rainwater. But Britain was never really under too much threat from acid rain: far more damaging are the effects it has in South East Asia.

British pollutants also caused acid rain in Sweden and the

Netherlands. In 1993, the Swedish environment minister accused Britain of threatening his country's economy and environment by failing to do its fair share in cutting European air pollution. His Norwegian counterpart, Thorbjørn Berntsen, was not so polite, calling the Secretary of State for Environment a *drizzle* - shibboleth.

What was done about it?

At first, the blame for acid rain was placed squarely on the shoulders of sulphur dioxide,

and consequently expensive action was taken to try and curb the emissions produced from burning coal. But now there is confusion over just how potent the effects of sulphur dioxide are.

And now?

The amount of nitrogen oxides in the air is increasing. Just one cause is increasing emissions from cars, rising 38 per cent between 1986 and 1991 despite the introduction of catalytic converters.

A myth?

A controlled experiment in Liphook in Hampshire was conducted to test the effect of sulphuric acid and ozone on trees. Five plots of forest have been continuously fumigated with sulphur dioxide or ozone ever since to test the theory that this causes the trees to die. They thrived.

The future

According to the Department of Environment, things could not be better. In December they

announced that the UK was among the first countries to sign up to the UNECE Second Sulphur Protocol which commits Britain to cutting sulphur dioxide emissions by 81 per cent of the levels of the 1980s.

Elsewhere, the outlook is not so rosy. According to official sources, the use of energy, and with it the emissions of sulphur dioxide, will triple during the next 20-30 years.

Sam Coates

Serena Mackesy
In my week

Whizzing past the window at regular intervals are the legs of an impossibly slim woman dangling from a trapeze

Rob used to play Rugby. He dropped out for a year because of injuries and was taken to Circus Space by a friend. Ordinary people, when they've got injuries, take up low-impact sports like sitting around, or moaning about getting old. Not Rob. He took up tumbling, then acrobatics and then the flying trapeze. Now he works there as well. This is how modern youth runs away to join the circus.

We're not very good at circus in this country. Indeed, "circus skills" has become a shorthand catch-all insult, like "train-spotting", "anorak" and "chalet girl". The phrase conjures images of drunks in freezing caravans supplementing their income through unlocked windows. That, or hordes with beards and ponytails cross-legged on the floor, running foam-rubber balls up their arms while giving expositions on advanced spiff-rolling.

Circus Space aims to change this: built in the shell of Shoreditch Power Station, they run BTECs, practice for pros and classes in everything from knife throwing and whip cracking to clowning. So deadly is their aim, they're acting as one of the venues for the upcoming London International Mime Festival.

Waiting in the reception area (parquet floor, round tables, No Smoking signs) for Rob to show me what's what, I peer through a picture window. Six people in loose garb - mostly sweats, but there's a T-shirt and clown pants in there - bounce off a trapeze and starfish in the air. Whizzing past the window at regular intervals are the legs of an impossibly slim woman dangling from a trapeze. I'm reflecting on the rule learned and forgotten at school - that only girls with straight hair are good at gym - when a man speaks behind me. "I just had a cup of coffee," he says. "I haven't had one in ages. It's made me go really hyper. Really stressed." Ah.

Rob comes back from the shop and leads me up a corridor. At the foot of the stairs

hang bits of A4 paper. They say things like "male partner required for long-term partnership with young girl performing adagio and aerial work. Directed by top circus director" and "for sale: Japanese Unicorn, 24ins wheel, very little used". Rob's a nice guy, even though he's on a mission. Like fit people always are, to stress how easy their craft is. "You don't have to be hyper-fit at all," he says. "It's not a long-capacity sport. And all of them tone you. You find your muscles get stronger quite quickly. The thought of my keyboard-shot arms trying to hold me onto a bar for more than two seconds turns me green."

On the petit volante, impossibly slim woman swings forward, pointing her toes, back, lifting her bum to avoid the platform ("when people start," says Rob, "you see them hitting their legs all the time"), flips over and hangs by her legs. A bearded man hooks his feet into the cradle, 20ft in the air, drops



so it's 4ft thick - upright. Most land on their backs, or pinch forward and finish the manoeuvre prone on the plastic. One girl - she's got the ponytail hit right, but the rest isn't following naturally - has little luck even hitting the trapeze. She takes a run-up, goes "oops, sorry", runs back again, runs up again, goes "oops, sorry" again and gets the giggles. A man in trainers has been walking forwards and backwards on the tight-wire - it's about 2ft off the ground - solidly for about an hour and a half. One would have thought boredom would have set in, but tight-wire obviously has equivalent properties to computer games.

The people on the trapeze - what do you call them? swingers? trapezoids? - take it in turns to strap on a safety harness called a Lunge, though whether this name was derived from lunging horses or lunging towards the ground is shrouded in mystery. Secured to the ceiling by a series of pulleys, it prevents the athlete from plummeting too quickly. "You need it," Rob had said earlier. "When I first started, I was concentrating so hard on my trick that I forgot to hold on to the trapeze." It's fun watching people let go and swoop down in slo-mo: it reminds

me of Lulu as Peter Pan.

They fling themselves from the bar and catch the hands of the man on the cradle. The tumblers come off the floor and prepare to go out into the night. Everyone, it seems, has come by hike. London's hike riders are a serious lot. The sub-group no longer consists of people who've lost their driving licences; nowadays it's a way of defining yourself. As they strap on anti-taxi protection, they make plans. "You here Monday?" Sure am. It's part of my New Year's Resolution to get my arse over here more often. "Yeah. It's part of everybody's. That's why the classes are so full. Give 'em a couple of weeks, though, and they'll have gone off the idea."

to vertical from his knees, and proceeds to pull up to horizontal using only his stomach muscles. Your tummy needs to be more washboard than wash-bag to do something like that. The tumbling class continues. It's led by Adrian, once a British Youth Gymnast. His left forearm is in plaster. "He did it at his gym," says Rob. "He was on the high bars, doing spins. They wear these gloves to protect their hands. His glove snapped." Adrian kept spinning while his hand didn't. He broke his arm in two places. "Clean breaks, though," says Rob.

The tumblers queue for the trapeze; they've graduated to mid-air somersaults, trying to hit the crash-mat - doubled up now

How to be a man: walk tall, knit

In the beginning, there were things that wriggled. After a while, there were things that could swim. Some of these hauled themselves out of the water and learnt to flop. In time, they progressed from a flop to a crawl; and from there it was a short step to things that could waddle, hop, gallop, scamper and swing from branch to branch. And finally, there were things that could walk us.

Walk (Radio 3, Sunday) was a mildly pretentious look at what our peculiar method of locomotion has come to mean in the 20th century when, in Patrick Wright's phrase, it has "been reinvented as a philosophical investigation perched on legs". He'd gathered an impressive - or depressing, depending on your point of view - amount of evidence in support of this statement: Richard Mabey on walking as a means of staking out territory; Richard Long reciting one of his walking poems (and coming across, in the absence of any visual stimulation, as surprisingly pedestrian); Richard Holmes on following in the footsteps of Coleridge

Robert Hanks
the week on radio

and Wordsworth, and feeling how the rhythms of their walks infected their poetry; Iain Sinclair (I assume - names and voices weren't always easy to connect) on following in the footsteps of William Blake, and seeing how his rambles through London were bodied out in the rambling visions of "Jerusalem"; and Tom Paulin on the vocabulary of walking - sauntering, "soodling", "going on the dander".

At times, we seemed to be wandering away from the path, and it ended in a very flat-footed fashion, with a poem

about, roughly, a Czech performance artist walking from Rimbaud's grave to William Blake's. The programme was at its best when it kept its feet firmly on the ground, standing on particular examples. Mabey, for instance, sounded sententious on the subject of walking as territorial claim, because he talked in general terms: the same point sounded far more convincing when Tom Paulin conjured the spectre of Drummecree (he was also good on the strangeness of walking in woods for someone brought up in unwooded Northern Ireland). And the sheer weight of data offered on the connection between poetry and walking made that persuasive: nobody mentioned it, but presumably this has something to do with why lines are divided up into feet.

Still, you did feel that all this emphasis on the spiritual significance of walking obscured a more important point - it's mechanical significance. We didn't, after all, evolve into bipedal animals because it made us into more effective poets but because it offered us some selective advantage at some time in the past. This is

one of the main topics of *Slaves to Nature* (Radio 4, Thursday), a three-part stroll through current ideas about human evolution. Last week we got the latest thinking on uprightiness, which is that it was a good way of regulating body temperature as the African climate warmed up a few million years ago: walking upright exposes less of your body to the noonday sun and more of it to cooling air-currents; it also uses less energy than knuckle-trailing. Once this was sorted out, too, we could stop panting quite so much, which made speech possible.

All this was plausible but somehow rather dissatisfying. Much more exciting was this week's suggestion that what gave *Homo sapiens* the edge over other hominid species was that we developed needlework. You can evolve all the layers of subcutaneous fat you like, guess the thinking, but if somebody else has come up with a decent shirt then once the next ice age rolls in they're going to be laughing at you. It's irrational, I know, but I somehow feel I ought to learn to knit.

A right royal linguistic revolution

The last time you looked in a dictionary, "royal" was an adjective. The next time, it will have mutated into a noun. "The royals" was the sobriquet used by one and all on *Monarchy: The Nation Decides* (ITV, Tues), from Trevor McDonald all the way down to the born-again socialist Max Clifford. We now refer to the "royals" instead of the Royal Family, much as we say "privates" instead of "private parts": the second half of the phrase has been cut adrift, marooned by mass linguistic indolence. Forget the telephonic vote of confidence that ought to tell the sovereign a thing or two about how highly the monarchy is esteemed. Even royal subjects say "royals" as if it's cockney rhyming slang. (As in royal yacht: snot. Or royal box: bollocks etc.)

Given the ugly mood of the debate, it's no wonder that the most strident panellist was a popular thriller writer with a basic training in catering to the mob. Frederick Forsyth took the pulse of the audience and concluded that only blood-curdling arrogance would earn him the elbow room to have his say. "Shut up and listen", the words he scowled at anyone else on the panel who dared to challenge him, could turn into one of those catchphrases inadvertently handed down to the nation by television. A hit like

Jasper Rees
the week on television

"Do I not like that" (or, according to Carlton's exhaustive research, "Do I not like that Parker-Bowles woman?").

Among the multitude of panellists invited by Roger Cook to say their piece in 10 seconds was Rosalind Miles, captioned here as a historian. When she cropped up two nights earlier on *FutureWatch* (BBC1, Sun) she was billed as a psychologist and sociologist. Assuming she didn't switch careers some time on Monday, we can attribute the discrepancy to one of two causes. Either Carlton deemed the longer job description too polysyllabic for an audience in no mood for anything but short, sharp Anglo-Saxon. Or they simply made a mistake, to go with all the others jostling noisily under the vast overarching

mistake of the programme's actual existence.

Later that night, the people's channel redeemed itself with Avi Lewis's wonderfully rosy profile of David Bowie: *An Earthling at 50* (ITV, Tues). For reasons even the baying monarchist mob might be able to work out, turned up in the same week as Alan Yentob's parallel interview in *Changes: Bowie at 50* (BBC2, Sat). There was an unavoidable overlap: the questions, the answers, and the fact that both interviewers designed their interviews to be as much about themselves as about their interviewee. Yentob, in particular, who made a seminal rockumentary about Bowie in the mid-Seventies, was revisiting not only Bowie's but also his own creative peak.

But the textbook tells of two ways to make an arts documentary, and here they both were: the conventional narrative interview, and the mimetic essay that pays its subject the compliment of imitation. Yentob kicked off on top of a skyscraper in Manhattan, affording a clear, lofty view of straight lines. Lewis, meanwhile, was down there in the mayhem of the streets, hunting for Ziggy among the muddle of cultural signposts. Yentob included a clip from his old *OmniBus* film of Bowie cut-and-pasting his lyrics. In more exploratory style, Lewis opted to do the shuffling

for him, editing his answers into an illuminating new order. It's been done before in Bowie profiles, but never as resourcefully. In one wittily reductive sequence, the grab-bag of names Bowie dropped in the course of the interview were clubbed together into a half-minute index: there the man was, distilled to the essence of a single list.

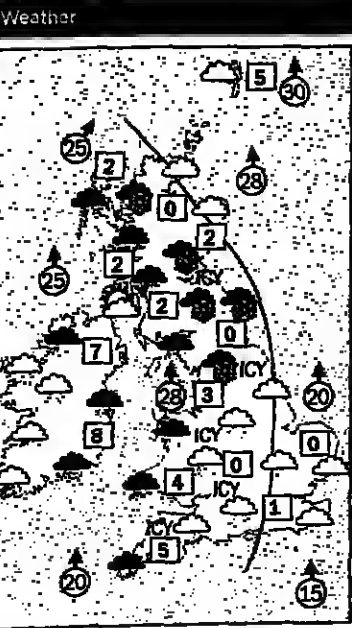
One of Bowie's *homo nists* claimed that "the 21st century began in the 1970s". We got round to confronting the moral quandaries it might throw up in *FutureWatch*, the week's other debating chamber. The set was a steel-sculpted version of Bowie's Glass Spider tour (or, to its friends, the White Elephant tour). In the chair, gestulating like an unfulfilled mime artist, was television's upmarket sensationalist Michael Buerk. Bowie's career may preach the value of eclecticism, but like historian-psychologist-sociologist Rosalind Miles, how many jobs can Buerk credibly hold down? When he read the lead item on *The Nine O'Clock News* (BBC1, Thurs) about yachtsman Tony Bullimore's miraculous escape, you could just picture him introducing the same item on 599. Newsreaders like McDonald and Buerk are hired to bring moral authority to their extramural work, but the more widely they rent it out, the more that authority is eroded.

DAMIEN HURTS...and his painfully creative struggle

THE LONDON CONTEMPORARY ART FAIR 97
DAMIEN, THERE SEEMS TO BE MUCH HYPE ABOUT ART BEING THE HIGH FASHION.

DO YOU THINK THIS IS TRUE, OR IS THE ENTIRE ART WORLD JUST FLOGGING A DEAD HORSE?

NO..... JUST ME!



General Situation and 5-Day Outlook

Pressure will be low to the north and west of the British Isles over the next few days with a mild southwesterly flow.

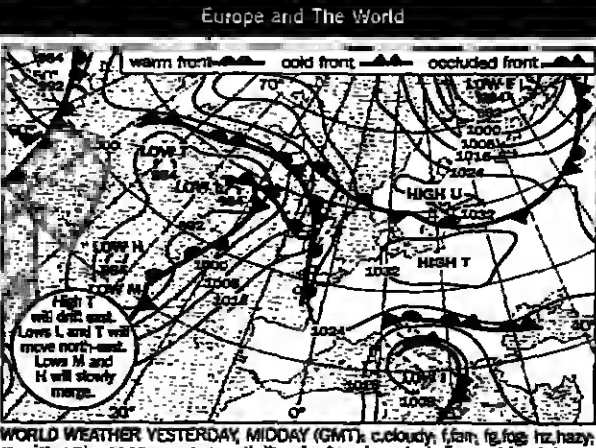
Today, sleet and snow over Scotland will turn to rain as strong southerly winds bring a rise in temperature. However, the Northern Isles will start dry with rain, sleet and strengthening winds to come. Northern Ireland will get some rain and a strong southerly wind, but it will be milder than late. Meanwhile, rain, sleet and snow will be spreading east across England and Wales, but with the snow mostly on northern hills.

Sunday will be milder almost everywhere, with southwesterly winds. However, it will be very cloudy with some rain or drizzle in the north and west.

Monday and Tuesday will see showery rain over Scotland and Northern Ireland with strong southerly winds. There should, though, be plenty of dry weather across England and Wales with lighter winds. The wetter, windier weather will move slowly southeast around midweek. However, it should stay fine and dry across central and eastern England.

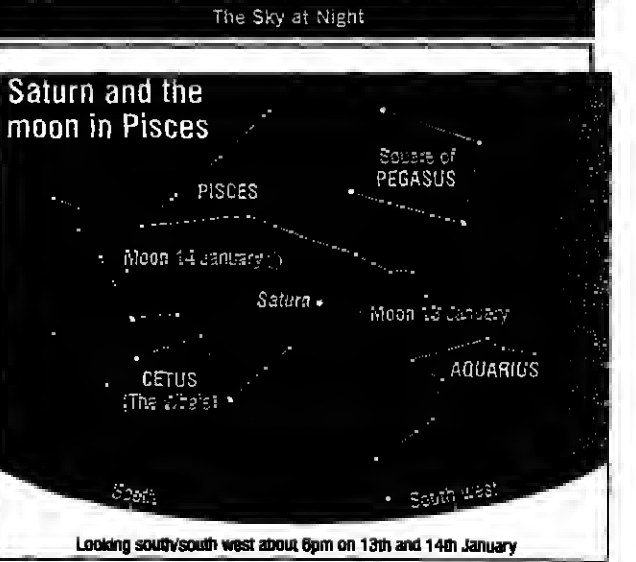
Aberdeen	c 2 36	Cardiff	c -1 30	Ipswich	c 1 30	Oxford	c 1 34
Angelsey	c 2 36	Carlisle	c 1 34	Isles of Scilly	c 7 45	Plymouth	c 1 34
Ayr	c 2 36	Dover	c 2 36	Jersey	c 3 37	Ronaldsdown	c 3 37
Belfast	c 4 39	Dublin	c 2 36	Liverpool	c 3 37	Scarborough	c 2 36
Birmingham	c 2 36	Edinburgh	c 2 36	Lisland	c 5 41	Southampton	c 1 30
Blackpool	c 2 36	Exeter	c -1 30	London	c 0 32	Southend	c -1 30
Bournemouth	c 0 32	Glasgow	c 3 37	Manchester	c 4 39	Stornoway	c 4 39
Brighton	c 0 32	Gurnsey	c 4 39	Newcastle	c 1 34	Tiree	c 5 41
Bristol	c 0 32	Inverness	c 2 28	Nottingham	c 0 32	York	c 2 36

Lighting-up Times		Yesterday's Readings		Air Quality		Outlook for Today		High Tides	
Today		Today		Today		Today		AM	PM
London	4:15pm to 8:02am	London	4:15pm to 8:02am	London	NO ₂	London	NO ₂	3.00	7.4
Bristol	4:25pm to 8:11am	Bristol	4:25pm to 8:11am	S England	Moderate	S England	Good	0.17	9.9
Birmingham	4:18pm to 8:13am	Birmingham	4:18pm to 8:13am	Wales	Good	Wales	Good	8.40	14.5
Manchester	4:14pm to 8:20am	Manchester	4:14pm to 8:20am	C England	Moderate	C England	Good	7.43	19.07
Newcastle	4:03pm to 8:25am	Newcastle	4:03pm to 8:25am	N England	Moderate	N England	Good	1.42	3.6
Glasgow	4:09pm to 8:41am	Glasgow	4:11pm to 8:40am	Scotland	Good	Scotland	Good	1.42	3.6
Belfast	4:23pm to 8:40am	Belfast	4:25pm to 8:39am	N Ireland	Good	N Ireland	Good	0.30	4.3



Amsterdam	sn -3 27	Florence	c 10 50	New York	c -1 30
Athens	c 17 63	Frankfurt	sn -2 28	Nice	c 10 50
Auckland	c 19 1	Geneva	c 17 63	Niцца	119 66
Bangkok	c 30 85	Glasgow	c 17 63	Paris	m -2 28
Barcelona	c 11 52	Helsinki	c -7 19	Prague	m -2 28
Beirut	c 19 66	Hong Kong	c 18 64	Reykjavik	c 2 36
Belgrade	c 17 63	Jakarta	c 10 50	Rio de Jan.	c 12 50
Bombay	c 23 27	Jerusalem	c 16 61	Riyadh	c 24 75
Buenos Aires	c 18 64	Jo'burg	c 23 73	Rome	c 21 70
Brussels	sn -2 28	Kuala Lumpur	c 13 91	Singapore	c 30 86
Budapest	c 2 36	Los Angeles	c 15 59	Sydney	c 21 70
Cairo	c 21 70	Madrid	c 17 63	Taipei	c 20 68
Casablanca	c 17 63	Manila	c 16 61	Tokyo	c 10 50
Cebu	c 12 54	Medbourne	c 17 63	Toronto	sn -5 23
Christchurch	c 18 64	Mexico City	c 17 63	Vladivostok	c 21 70
Copenhagen	c -1 30	Miami	c 28 82	Warsaw	m -8 18
Darwin	c 32 90	Moscow	c 12 54	Washington	c 0 32
		Munich	c -2 28	Wellington	c 20 68

AA Roadwatch
A406 Greater London. Angel Road, Upper Edmonton. Major roadworks over Lee Valley Viaduct to add lanes, flyovers and tunnels to the North Circular. M5 Gloucestershire. J13 Stroud (A419 Stonehouse), major roadworks on the junction roundabout with only one lane open. Expect delays at times leaving or joining the M5. M2 Gloucestershire. Between J1 Hambrook (A4174 Bland Ring Road) and J2 Stapleton (B4469 Eastville). Long-term roadworks with a southbound contraflow at peak times. M8 City of Edinburgh. J2 Newbridge Spur (M9). Major roadworks. Down to 2 lanes on the roundabout. Delays likely on all approaches. A38 Cornwall. Tarkenton, near Bodmin. Temporary traffic lights are likely to cause delays. Devon A38. Salcombe dip. Highmoor. Long-term roadworks continue with traffic control at times. A35 Dorset. Buxton Road, Christchurch. Lane closed both ways for work on a new roundabout.



The next seven days see the Moon waxing from a modest crescent this evening to a substantial gibbous Moon by the end of the week. Our natural satellite makes a complete circuit of the sky each month, so its position against the background of stars changes noticeably from night to night, as do its rising and setting time.

On Monday and Tuesday (the 13th and 14th), the Moon acts as a useful signpost for finding the planet Saturn in the early evening sky. On Monday, the Moon lies just below Saturn in the south-western sky. By the next night, it is somewhat above the planet. During the day the pair will have passed within two degrees of each other. The dance of the Moon and Saturn takes place in the somewhat inconspicuous zodiacal constellation of Pisces. The Moon and naked-eye planets routinely make close encounters in the sky since their paths are all confined to a relatively narrow band of constellations.

Jacqueline Mitton



The big picture

Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould
Sat 10.55pm BBC2

Before you go and see the much raved-about *Shine*, here's a chance to compare it with another virtuoso piece about a pianist - François Girard's excellent and truly original movie about the eccentric Canadian pianist Glenn Gould (above). Gould's life (he died in 1982 aged 50) is remembered in 32 brief snapshots (some dramatised, others featuring the real Gould) - a structuring device borrowed from Bach's Goldberg Variations.

Television preview

Recommended viewing this weekend
by Gerard Gilbert

Sir Walter Scott's medieval romance, *Ivanhoe* (published in 1819), has had two notable screen versions made of it - a jolly 1958 TV series with a fresh-faced Roger Moore in the title role, and the full-blooded 1952 film starring namesakes Robert and Elizabeth Taylor. The book is also responsible for a pallid 1982 TV-movie starring Anthony Andrews, of all people, as the swashbuckling avenger knight.

There is nothing pallid about the BBC's new *Ivanhoe* (Sun BBC1), which delights in the muck and realism of 12th-century life in a way that Scott's historically wobbly novel never did. *Ivanhoe*, in case you didn't know, is King Richard I's right-hand seigneur, falsely accused of betraying the Lionheart to the blackmailing Austrians. He returns to England to clear his name, betroth himself to the already betrothed Rowena and generally ride the kingdom of weaselly Prince John (a delicious cameo of depraved weakness by Ralph Brown). The stills of actor Steven Waddington (imagine the Liverpool defender Mark Wright with a bad perm) make you worry that he might be in the Anthony Andrews class

of *Ivanhoe*, but he translates better in the flesh, as it were. The adaptation is by Deborah Cook and the direction, by Stuart Orme, delights, as it should, in the out-and-out romance of the piece (eyes are lighted in moments of passionate significance, for example). Good stuff. I shouldn't be surprised if this becomes the *Poldark de nos jours*.

The other must-see of the weekend is a repeat - David Hinton's Bafta Award-winning film, *Children of the Revolution* (Sat BBC2), reuniting classical musicians who studied together at Beijing's Central Conservatory during the Cultural Revolution. "Studied" is a relative term here, as most of their time was spent forming Red Guard units, beating and "re-educating" their teachers, and categorising composers as either "useful and harmless" (Beethoven fell into this one), "useless and harmless" or "useless and harmful". Eventually Chairman Mao had no more use for his child crusaders and packed them off to Inner Mongolia, where they had nothing left to do but till the semi-barren fields and purge each other. A stunning insight into a little understood moment in

history. By coincidence or not, the ongoing *People's Century* (Sun BBC1), now dumped on to late Sunday evening, looks at the 20 years of Mao's "great leap forward". For the truer understanding of this tumultuous epoch, though, catch *Children of the Revolution*.

Back with classical musicians, *Naked Classics* (Sun C4) this week looks at child prodigies - including a 10-year-old Korean girl who knocks off perfect violin adagios like most children her age knock off blotchy water colours of crooked houses and stick people. It's up to Nigel Kennedy, once a child prodigy himself before he was re-invented in his thirties as a punk rebel, to read out the dictionary definition of a prodigy - "something monstrous or abnormal".

Assignment (Sun BBC2) exposes another destination for paedophile sex tourism, Sri Lanka. According to the UN, one in five tourists to this beautiful but dirt-poor island, come to have sex with under-age children - mainly boys. The children's value in the scheme of things is articulated by a pimp, who offers an undercover journalist an all-in package for \$50 of "a hotel, air-conditioning, a boy, Fanta Cola..."



The big match

World Professional Darts Championship
Sat 4pm BBC1

The only sport unlikely to be affected by the weather this weekend is the Embassy World Darts Championship. For those of you hitherto unconcerned with the upheavals in the world of feathers, the sport is going the way of boxing, with the top players fighting it out in the Sky-sponsored WDC World Darts Championship (current champ Phil Taylor), while the rump (or should that be the gut?) throw for the Embassy World Championship down in deepest Surrey. *Bullseye* referee Tony Green (above) is your commentator.

Saturday television and radio

BBC 1

- 7.05 *The Pink Panther* (R) (755695).
- 7.25 *News and Weather* (933721).
- 7.30 *Children's BBC*. *Zoom*. 7.40 *Speed Racer*.
- 8.05 *The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest*.
- 8.30 *The New Adventures of Superman*.
- 9.15 *Live and Kicking*.
- 12.12 *Weather* (707085).
- 12.15 *Grandstand*: 12.20 Football Focus. 1.00 *News*.
- 1.05 *Racing from Leopardstown*. 1.15 *Tennis* - Sydney International: highlights of Tim Henman's semi-final match against Goran Ivanisevic. 1.30 *Racing from Leopardstown*. 1.45 *Tennis*: Preview of the Australian Open, which begins in Melbourne next week. 2.00 *Racing from Leopardstown*: the 2.10 *Ladbroke Hurdle* in Ireland, Europe's most lucrative handicap hurdle. 2.15 *Tennis*. 2.30 *Racing from Leopardstown*. 2.45 *Olympic Magazine*: a look ahead at some of the sports in next year's Winter Olympics from Nagano in Japan. 3.30 *Table Tennis*. 3.55 *Football Half-times*. 4.00 *Darts* - First semi-final of the Embassy World Championship. See the big match, above. 4.40 *Final Score* (S) (21104614).
- 5.20 *News and Weather* (9338430).
- 5.30 *Regional News and Sport* (263508).
- 5.35 *Cartoon* (194148).
- 5.45 *The Simpsons*. Nice to see this work of genius getting the wider appreciation it deserves (and check the gathering moral indignation from the *Telegraph/Spectator* end of the political spectrum). This week, Homer snatches on Krusty the Clown after seeing him commit a robbery (S) (510492).
- 6.10 *Due South* (S) (537965).
- 6.55 *News at Ten* (S) (345072).
- 7.50 *The National Lottery Live* (S) (262968).
- 8.05 *Casualty*. Charlie and Baz understandably freak out when nanny Margaret turns up at Holly A & E with baby Louis and a blood-stained nappy (455789).
- 8.55 *News and Sport* (Followed by *Weather*) (921985).
- 9.14 *National Lottery Update* (456782).
- 9.15 *Deadly Invasion* (Rockne S O'Bannon 1994 US). Killer bees from South America move north to terrorise an all-American family. Kind of gets you rooting for the *Fifties*, doesn't it? *For anyone who saw the recent Equinox film about this particular breed of killer bees will know, this is loosely based on real-life happenings* (S) (4083782).
- 10.40 *Match of the Day*. Aston Villa v Newcastle United is the main event (S) (877395).
- 11.45 *The Frank Skinner Show* (R) (206256).
- 12.15 *Top of the Pops*. With Erasure, Blur, Kavanagh and Terrorism (S) (77725).
- 12.45 *News at Ten* (S) (345072).
- Before John Travolta recreated himself as a cult item, he starred in this feeble comedy about two hip New Yorkers who become part of a KGB plot to teach Russian spies how to act American. Within two years, *MacDonalds* would be doing it for them (357812).
- 2.15 *Weather* (1901541). To 2.20am.

BBC 2

- 7.05 *Desperate Search* (Joseph Lewis 1952 US). Howard Keel and Jane Greer lead the search for their two children, missing after their plane crashes in British Columbia (3006411).
- 8.10 *Good Old Boy* (Tom G Robertson 1988 US). Rites of passage for a 12-year-old boy in wartime Mississippi (28014275).
- 10.00 *Chavakya* (S) (713625).
- 10.35 *Network East*. The winner of the supermodel competition is announced and singer Akka Ahmed talks about his career (S) (6535782).
- 11.20 *Q Asia* (S) (5613850).
- 11.55 *The Natural World: Firebird*. Flamingo life in the African Rift Valley (R) (S) (7183879).
- 12.45 *Film 97* with Barry Norman (S) (774072).
- 1.15 *Artists and Models* (Frank Tashlin 1955 US). New York cartoonist Dean Martin uses the wacky dreams of his pal (Jerry Lewis) as the inspiration for his strip. Shirley MacLaine co-stars (8772324).
- 3.00 *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (David Swift 1967 US). Musical satire with Robert Morse recreating his Broadway role as the window cleaner using his wiles to climb the corporate ladder. The Frank Lesser score is choreographed by Bob Fosse (53898).
- 5.00 *TOTP 2* (S) (9459362).
- 5.45 *Darts: World Championship*. The semi-finals (1305237).
- 7.10 *News and Sport* (Followed by *Weather*) (939459).
- 7.25 *What the Papers Say*. With Kevin McGuire of the *Daily Mirror* (S) (115891).
- 7.35 *TX: Children of the Revolution*. See Preview, above (R) (S) (886140).
- 9.00 *The Death Us Do Part*. An episode from 1972 finds Alf Garnett visiting the hospital to meet his new grandson (7430).
- 9.30 *The Hawk* (David Hayman 1992 UK). Dourly atmospheric thriller starring Helen Mirren as a housewife who begins to suspect that husband George Costigan is a serial killer. Mirren is good - perhaps too good. She seems too intelligent to find herself in this set up in the first place (R) (S) (5678898).
- 10.55 *Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould*. See the big picture, above (1993) (S) (71974411).
- 12.30 *Death of a Schoolboy* (Peter Patzak 1990 Austria). The story of the 17-year-old anarchist Gervasio Princip, who tearfully assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914 (S) (9101522).
- 1.55 *Weather* (2580102). To 2.00am.
- REGIONS: Wales: 6.05pm *Darts*. 7.25 *The Noble Border*. 7.53 *A View from the Border*. 7.55 *Tending the Border*. 8.28 *A View from the Border*. 8.30 *No Borders*. 9.13 *A View from the Border*. 9.15 *Border Country*. 9.48 *A View from the Border*. 9.50 *Film*. On the Black Hill. 11.40 *Film*: Screen Two: The Hawk. 1.05 *32 Short Films*.

ITV/News

- 6.00 *GMTV*: 6.00 *News*. 6.10 *Mole in the Hole*. 6.30 *Professor Bubble*. 6.50 *Bug Alert*. 7.10 *Disney's Wake Up in the Wild*. 8.20 *Gargoyles*. 8.55 *Masked Rider* (1851701).
- 9.25 *Scratchy and Co.*. Guests are Scottish rockers Texas and actor Anthony Edwards, better known as Stonehenge from *Neighbours* (S) (6898169).
- 11.30 *The Chart Show* (S) (10430).
- 12.30 *The Making of James and the Giant Peach* (R) (92966).
- 1.00 *News and Weather* (9647181).
- 1.05 *London Weekend Today* (96470188).
- 1.10 *Stuntmasters* (R) (80362817).
- 1.30 *Ambush at Tomahawk Gap* (Fred Sears 1953 US). Four ex-convicts are attacked by Indians while trying to retrieve their loot from an earlier robbery. Thoroughly undistinguished western with John Hodiak, John Derek and David Brian (372562).
- 2.50 *Seabreeze DSV* (S) (19847053).
- 4.45 *News and Results* (1619885).
- 5.00 *London Weekend Tonight* (1514817).
- 5.20 *Cheerless*. Cher becomes infuriated with the latest member of her acting class (1967782).
- 5.50 *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* (S) (535701).
- 6.15 *Gladiators*. Celebrity Challenge. A special New Year charity edition (S) (357614).
- 7.15 *Blind Date* (Followed by *National Lottery Result*) (S) (353898).
- 8.15 *Family Fortunes* (S) (216633).
- 8.45 *News and National Lottery Update* (Followed by *Weather*) (936817).
- 8.59 *LWT Weather* (177633).
- 9.00 *Happy Birthday Shirley*. Queen of kitsch, the extraordinary Shirley Bassey, celebrates her 60th birthday in the company of Ray Charles, Sean Connery, Bruce Forsyth, Joe Pasquale and the Muppets. You're kind of party? (S) (8898).
- 10.00 *Midnight Story* (Michael Ritchie 1992 US). Enjoyable boxing scam movie - a sort of cross between *Rocky* and *The Sting* - with super-cool ex-con James Woods stumbling across an illegal boxing cartel and attempting to flee it with the help of a despised Bruce Dern is the object of the scam (218633).
- 11.50 *In Bed with Medinera*. The TV series with the tortuously punning title returns with comedian Bob Mui starring the airwaves for general wackiness (748256).
- 12.20 *The Final Heist* (George Mihalka 1991 US). A heist in which a specialty chocolate is the prize. *Alfred Hitchcock* plays an art thief forced to come out of retirement and steal a priceless Van Gogh after his daughter is kidnapped (477198).
- 2.05 *American Gladiators* (S) (2849522).
- 2.55 *Tropical Heat* (S) (7821947).
- 3.55 *Club Nation* (R) (6122270).
- 4.50 *Cool Vibe* (R) (38394812).
- 5.05 *Coach* (S) (4576102). To 5.30am.

Channel 4

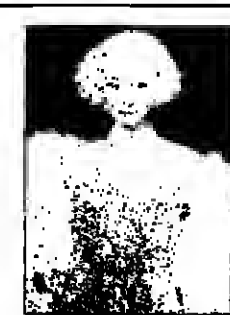
- 6.10 *Early Morning: Sesame Street* (R) (3372481).
- 7.05 *Blaker Mice from Mars* (R) (8126324).
- 7.30 *Dennis* (R) (776466).
- 7.45 *First Edition* (7752121).
- 8.00 *Trans World Sport* (80966).
- 9.00 *The Morning Line* (S) (57053).
- 10.00 *Gazzetta Football Italia* (91188).
- 11.00 *Blitz* (S) (71324).
- 12.00 *Voicework Queen* (7400256).
- 12.15 *Red Mountain* (William Dieterle 1951 US). Alan Ladd plays a Confederate officer who joins notorious rebel William Clark Quantrill (John Ireland), but turns against him after witnessing his brutal methods (757131).
- 1.50 *Racing from Wolverhampton and Leopardstown*. The 2.05 *Fierce Leopardstown Chase*. 2.20 *Tote All Weather*. 2.35 *The Ladbroke Hurdle*. 3.20 *Weatherby's Group Maiden*. 3.50 *Handicap Stakes*. Plus, recorded action from the 1.20 and 1.50 races at Wolverhampton (S) (21453053).
- 4.05 *Fans Bissell's West Country Kitchen*. One, honey and saffron tart is on the menu (2669169).
- 4.35 *Bus Stop*. Repeat behind-the-scenes glimpse of London's Victoria Coach Station (R) (8876481).
- 5.05 *Brookside Omnibus* (S) (4860256).
- 6.30 *Right to Reply* (Followed by *News Summary and Weather*) (S) (863053).
- 7.05 *Life After Soap*. Former soap stars discuss the problems of leaving (R) (927614).
- 7.20 *The Desert Rats* (Robert Wise 1953 UK). James Mason reprises his moving portrayal of Rommel from *The Desert Fox* as Richard Burton commands a brigade of Aussies at the Battle of Tobruk (32149237).
- 9.00 *The Fragile Heart*. 2/3. Continuing the swift repeat of Paula Milne's heart surgeon drama. Nigel Hawthorne stars (R) (S) (407985).
- 10.20 *The Falcon and the Snowman* (John Schlesinger 1985 US). Rather portentous spy movie based on the real-life 1970s case of a Californian college dropout (here played by Timothy Hutton) and his druggie friend (Sean Penn) who sold America's top secrets to the Russians. It's a fascinating story whose rich potential is all but discarded by Schlesinger. David Suchet and Lori Singer co-star (S) (40798508).
- 12.45 *Pizza*. Laura Nightingale presents the first in a new series which travels through the world of American TV. Tonight's offerings include an interview with former *Dallas* star Charlene Tilton and an adult puppet show (2243218).
- 1.30 *The Girlie Show*. From last night (R) (S) (57522).
- 2.00 *Ricki Lake* (R) (S) (4714676).
- 2.45 *Beavis and Butt-Head* (R) (S) (4714676).
- 3.10 *Bless This House*. The American sitcom of this title (R) (S) (3284273).
- 3.40 *The White Room*. Featuring Oasis, David Bowie and PM Dawn (R) (S) (1665367).
- 4.40 *The Beat Specialists* (R) (278367). To 5.50am.

ITV/Regions

- AMSLA**
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies*, Games and Videos (92966). 1.10 *Champions of the Future* (53193740). 1.40 *Cartoon Time* (3443531). 2.00 *Arnell* (547362). 3.30 *Baywatch* (7200072). 11.50 *Film: Murder* 101 (689527). 1.30am *Carnal Knowledge* (75218). 2.30am *Sound Bites* (7605744). 2.40am *Film: Party Heist* (385858). 4.30-5.30am *Funky Bunker* (80638).
- CHANNEL 3 NORTH EAST/STIRLING**
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies*, Games and Videos (92966). 1.10 *Thunder in Paradise* (6604879). 2.00 *Cartoon* (8862614). 2.05 *Channel 3 Film: Father Came Too* (532053). 2.10 *Yorks: Film: Father Came Too* (814169). 3.50 *Baywatch* (7200072). 5.10 *Cartoon* (547362). 5.30 *Baywatch* (7200072). 11.50 *Instant Replay* (205898). 12.50am *In Bed with Medinera* (7907096). 1.20am *Film: Green Beasts* (65175454). 3.50am *Funny Business* (63555562). 4.20am *Colin and Muriel's Movie Club* (64088582). 4.45-5.30am *Movie*. She Wrote (6234102).
- CENTRAL**
As London except: 12.30pm *Premiere* (92966). 1.10 *Champions of the Future* (53193740). 1.40 *Movies*, Games (74965614). 2.10 *Film: Greif* (820160). 3.45 *Cartoon* (547362). 4.30 *Cartoon* (547362). 5.10 *Film: Greif* (820160). 5.30 *Cartoon* (547362). 5.50 *Cartoon* (547362). 11.50 *Instant Replay* (205898). 12.50am *In Bed with Medinera* (7907096). 1.20am *Film: Green Beasts* (65175454). 3.50am *Funny Business* (63555562). 4.20am *Colin and Muriel's Movie Club* (64088582). 4.45-5.30am *Movie*. She Wrote (6234102).
- ITV**
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies*, Games and Videos (92966). 1.10 *West: Sportsweek* (4114605). *Wales: Airwolf* (5941463). 1.45 *West: Film: National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* (9292256). 2.05 *Wales: Cartoon Time* (8658941). 2.15 *Wales: Film: National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* (9292256). 2.40 *West: Robocop* (3300879). 3.55 *Wales: Robocop* (4532148). 4.15 *West: The List* (942546). 11.50 *Film: Greif* (820160). 1.30am *Cartoon Knowledge* (75218). 2.30am *Sound Bites* (7605744). 2.40am *Film: Party Heist* (385858). 4.30-5.30am *Funky Bunker* (80638).
- MERIDIAN**
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies*, Games and Videos (92966). 1.10 *World of Sailing Special* (4114605). 1.45 *Cartoon* (547362). 1.55 *Cartoon* (547362). 2.55 *Cartoon* (547362). 3.50 *Baywatch* (7200072). 11.50 *Film: Murder* 101 (689527). 1.30am *Carnal Knowledge* (75218). 2.30am *Sound Bites* (7605744). 2.40am *Film: Party Heist* (385858). 4.30-5.30am *Funky Bunker* (80638).
- WESTSUSSEX**
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies*, Games and Videos (92966). 1.10 *Film: Man About the House* (9727679). 2.55 *Cartoon* (547362). 3.50 *Cartoon* (547362). 4.30 *Cartoon* (547362). 5.10 *Cartoon* (547362). 5.30 *Cartoon* (547362). 11.50 *Film: Murder* 101 (689527). 1.30am *Carnal Knowledge* (75218). 2.30am *Sound Bites* (7605744). 2.40am *Film: Party Heist* (385858). 4.30-5.30am *Funky Bunker* (80638).
- SAC**
As C4 except: 6.10am *Sesame Street* (3372481). 10.00 *Boat School* (38121). 10.30 *New Gamesmaster* (72614). 12.00 *Moviewatch* (63566). 12.30pm *Film: The Godfather* (8817). 4.05 *Denise* (579308). 6.30 *Real Working Show* (411). 7.00 *Cartoon* (547362). 7.15 *Cartoon* (547362). 7.30 *Cartoon* (547362). 7.45 *Cartoon* (547362). 8.20 *Top Gear* (19594). 8.50 *Louis Lomax* (19594). 9.25 *Film: The Conquest of Paradise* (75917952). 12.15am *Whose Line is it Anyway?* (93763). 2.00-2.45am *Ricki Lake Show* (6194853).

Radio

- Radio 1**
(92.9-93.8MHz FM)
7.00am *Kevin Greening* 10.00 *Olive Pearce* 12.00 *Jo Whalley* 4.00 *John Peel* 7.00 *Danny Rampling* 9.00 *Rap Show* 12.00 *Reggae* *Dancehall* 12.00 *Essential Mix* 4.00-7.00am *Charlie Jordan*
- Radio 2**
(106.9-120kHz FM)
6.00am *Mo Dutt* 8.05 *Brian Matthews* 10.00 *Steve Wright's Saturday Show* 1.00 *Arthur Smith's Amazing Bits* 1.30 *Smith and Jones* *Sound Out* 2.00 *Judi Spies* 4.00 *Nick Barracough* 5.00 *Diamonds are Forever* 6.00 *Brian Ferry* in Concert 7.00 *The Elia Fitzgerald Songbooks* 7.30 *Shirley Bassey* in Concert 9.00 *David Jacobs* 10.00 *The Arts Programme*. See *Choice*, above. 12.05 *Charles Nove* 4.00-7.00am *Mo Dutt*
- Radio 3**
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.55am *Reverend*. *News Headlines*. 7.00 *Reverend*. 9.00 *Building a Library*. 10.15 *Record Release*. 11.15 *Reliques*. 12.00 *Private Passions*. Sir Isaiah Berlin talks to Michael Berkeley. 1.00 *Threads*. An exploration of the material world with Hannah Andressy. (2/5). 1.20 *Vintage Years*. The Philharmonia. Examining the partnership between the Philharmonia and Herbert von Karajan. 3.20 *The Finishing Touch*. David Campbell is joined by pianist Ronan O'Hara and the students from the Welsh College of Music and Drama to play and discuss the finer points of Brahms' Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34. (3/6). 4.05 *The BBC Orchestras*. 88C



Choice

The lines between art and fakery are blurred in tonight's Kaleidoscope Feature (7.20pm R4) on the critically acclaimed but non-existent poet Emi Malley, and in an Arts Programme on the actor as imitator, I Am What I'm Not (10.00 R2), featuring new Marlene Dietrich look-alike Stan Phillips (left).

- Symphony Orchestra/Andrew Davis**, BBC Symphony Chorus (women's voices). *Holst: The Planets*. 5.00 *Jazz Record Requests*. 5.45 *Musical Matters*. 6.30 *Live from the Met: La Bohème*. Puccini's celebrated four-act opera about young love and death in a Parisian garret. Cast includes Marcello Giordani, tenor (Rodolfo), Patricia Rattelle, soprano (Mimi), Anthony Michaels-Moore, baritone (Marcello), Paul Whelan, baritone (Schaunard), Hao Jiang Tian, bass (Colline), Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera, New York/Nello Santi. Acts 1 and 2. 17.30-8.00 *The James Naughtie Interview*. With British baritone Anthony Michaels-Moore. Act 3. (8-25-850 *Bohemian Parts*). Act 4. 9.30 *Blue Skies*. Professor Steve Jones attempts to quantify rock in art and science. 10.00 *Bacon Jazz Festival*. Allyn Shipton introduces a double bill recorded at the 1996 festival. American trumpeter Tom Harrel performs with a new sextet, and the young tenor saxophonist Joshua Redman is joined by Peter Bernstein (guitar), Peter Martin

- (piano), Christopher Thomas (bass) and Brian Blade (drums). 1.00 *Through the Night*. 1.01 *Violin Concerto*. Jasja Ilkka Kuusisto (violin), Odeon. 5.00 *Shirley Bassey*. Violin Concerto. Brahms: Violin Concerto in D. 2.15 *Jazz from Toronto*. 3.50 *Choral Concert*. 4.20 *Sibelius*. Symphony No. 4. 6.00-7.00am *Sequence*.
- Radio 4**
(92.4-94.0MHz FM) 158kHz LW
6.00am *News*. 6.10 *Farming Today*. 6.50 *Prayer for the Day*. 7.00 *Today*. 9.00 *News*. 9.05 *Spot on 4*. 9.30 *Breakaway*. 10.00 *Loose Ends*. 11.00 *My Father Said to Me*. 11.30 *From Our Own Correspondent*. 12.00 *Money Box*. 12.25 *Just a Minute*. 1.00 *News*. 1.10 *Any Questions?* Jonathan Dimbleby's guests are Michael Portillo MP, shadow health minister Tessa Jowell MP, chairperson of the Broadcasting Standards Commission, Lady Howe,

- and Andrew Foster, controller of the Audit Commission. 1.55 *Shipping Forecast*. 2.00 *Any Answers*. 2.30 *Playhouse: The Venus Bar*. Humorous drama by Yana Stanin in which a specialty chocolate becomes involved in the advertising campaign for a new chocolate bar. With Rachel Atkins and Nicholas Boulton. 3.45 *Hitting the Bull's Eye*. 4.00 *Island on the Edge*. 4.30 *Science Now*. 5.00 *Consequences*. Onys Blake-way assesses the impact of British Telecom privatisation. 5.40 *Footnotes*. 5.50 *Shipping Forecast*. 5.55 *Weather*. 6.00 *Six O'Clock News*. 6.25 *Week Ending*. 6.50 *Calendar Days*. 7.20 *Kaleidoscope Feature*. In 1943 two Australian poets decided to invent a fictional poetical genius as a response to what they saw as an increasingly pretentious avant garde. So taken in was the literary world by the works of "Emi Malley", that the effects of their scam still reverberate today. See *Choice*, above. 7.50 *On These Days*. 8.50 *Saturday Night Theatre: Wild Hops*. By Sally Wimbey. With George Innes. (2/4). 9.35 *Classics with Kay*. 9.50 *Ten to Ten*. 10.00 *News*. 10.15 *The Joke*. When Hungarian-born Adam returns to his native city of Budapest after a 40 year absence, he is forced to face the consequences of a joke he passed on as a child. With John Nettles. 11.15 *The Blue Room*. 11.45 *Aesthetes' Foot*.

- 12.00 *News***. 12.30 *The Late Story: The Stalled*. *On*. By Sak. 12.48 *Shipping Forecast*. 1.00-6.00am *As World Service*.
- Radio 5**
(103.9MHz FM)
6.05am *Ority Tackle* 6.30 *Brian Hayes* at Breakfast 9.05 *Weekend* with Kenward and Whitaker 11.05 *Top Gear* 11.35 *The Game's Up* 12.05 *Baker and Kelly Upfront* 1.05 *Spot on Five* 6.06 *Six O'Clock* 8.05 *The Treatment* 9.05 *Dailly UK* 10.05 *Brief Lives* 10.35 *World Up* 11.00 *Night Extra* 12.05 *Night Talk* 2.00 *Up All Night* 5.00-6.00am *Morning Reports*
- Classic FM**
(100.0-101.9MHz FM)
6.00am *Sarah Lucas* 9.00 *Couid*. 12.00 *Gardening Forum*. 1.00 *Alan Mann's Packed Lunch*. 4.00 *Jane Markham* 7.00 *Russian Revelation* 8.00 *Evening Concert*. Schubert: String Quartet in E flat; Mass No 2 in G; Gio Schone Muller; Symphony No 5 in B flat. 10.00 *The*

After this week's television poll on the future of the monarchy, Jack O'Sullivan plots a career strategy for the would-be Charles III, while James Cusick considers pretenders to the Scottish throne

Dump Camilla and find us a new Queen

The public image of the Prince of Wales is apparently to be given a facelift. We are told that a five-year strategy is being developed, aimed at restoring his reputation in time for the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002. By then, the Palace (that talking building) hopes that the Prince's divorce from Diana will be a fading memory, antipathy towards his mistress, Camilla Parker-Bowles, will have waned and we'll all be cheerfully waiting with the hunting for the succession of King Charles III.

At least that's the plan. And a few new advisers, including Tom Shebbeare, director of the Prince's Trust, have been drafted in to augment existing courtiers, who have so far failed to make Charles popular. The effort to improve the Prince's public standing now involves many people from beyond traditional royal circles, including Jonathan Porritt, the environmental campaigner, and Jonathan Dimbleby, the broadcaster.

But they have a tough job, promoting a man whom the public has come to regard, to coin a phrase Charles once used, as a monstrous carbuncle. The Prince's poor standing was demonstrated yet again this week when the audience of Carlton's TV's great debate on the monarchy said they would prefer Princess Anne to succeed to the throne.

So can the PR initiative make Charles lovable? I doubt it. For one thing, the Prince finds it impossible to listen to any advice for long. He has run through a lengthy list of private secretaries, from Edward Adeane, who moved on after Charles set aside royal etiquette and started criticising the nation's architects, to Richard Aylard, who left recently after being blamed when Charles's confession of adultery proved a PR failure.

It is also clear that at 48, the Prince is incorrigible. His long-standing relationship with Mrs Parker-Bowles, so damaging to public opinion, is, we are told, "not negotiable". Nor does he wish to change his lifestyle. The group will instead focus on remarketing what the Prince does already, highlighting his charitable work for the Prince's Trust, his campaigns against ugly architecture and his belief in conservation.

Yet even the cleverest marketing will not save Charles. Forget the polo matches, the flying, the action man poses. They may be what matters to Prince Charles as proof that he is man enough to be king. But they are not what the rest of us consider when reckoning up the balance sheet. What we remember is that when Prince

William ended up in hospital after cracking his skull with a golf club, Prince Charles went off to the opera. Can any of us recall seeing the Prince of Wales, would-be father of the nation, ever holding or touching his or any other child?



Can any of us recall the Prince holding his or any other child?

head for long periods of their marriage. In an age when defence is dead, how can he expect us to look up to him?

The answer that the Prince's new advisers are likely to give is: "Look at all he does". But that is no answer to the public perception of what he is - a distant father and an unloving husband.

A further, more fundamental problem is that the activist image of monarchy so favoured by Charles is not what we want. We like the Queen because she presides almost transcendently over British society. We like her for being there, rather than doing anything in particular. Most people neither know nor wish to know what she thinks on any particular issue.

The truth is that women are more adept than men at being modern British monarchs, because they are better at just being. Men want to be kings - to do things - but they haven't

woken up to the fact that this model of monarchy is dead. The history of the last few generations is that we have been prepared to tolerate inadequate men close to the throne as long as there was a woman around to do the job properly.

So we have put up with the ridiculous Prince Philip because his wife is in charge. And the rather inadequate George VI got by because Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, kept the show on the road. His brother, the short-reigning Edward VIII, would have been no good because the twice-divorced American, Mrs Simpson, was not our idea of a matriarch.

As for Charles, his quirky, eccentric, occasionally misanthropic outbursts were tolerated because at least his wife, Diana, seemed in touch with real life and would be Queen. In short, we were not waiting for a new king. We were waiting for another matriarch to replace the present Queen.

That possibility has been destroyed. Instead, we are being offered an ageing, crusty twit, who helped to destroy the matriarch-to-be. Is it any wonder that we don't have much time for him? And who is he offering as a replacement matriarch? The very woman whose activities destroyed the hopes of the favoured Diana.

Charles must realise that the task of the modern king is not to govern well, but to perform wonderful tasks, but to marry the right woman, who can then perform the symbolic tasks of which he seems incapable. If he fails to do so, he should not be surprised that people want Princess Anne as Queen.

It is easy to see why she is attractive. She came from the same dysfunctional family, but she has found a clear role for herself, done sterling, unsung work for Save the Children and been an Olympic champion. She has managed to divorce her first husband without acrimony, then marry a man she loves and still keep her children out of the public eye. Not had for a royal who is not overly intelligent.

Anne cannot succeed to the throne, but there is another way the nation can get a matriarch into Buckingham Palace. Charles could be pressured into waiving his succession in favour of Prince William. Thus Diana would be restored to the central role of Queen Mother.

All of this points to the advice that Prince Charles's counselors should be giving him. "Dump Camilla, find a new wife everyone likes and give us the matriarch we need." But they will not be offering that advice. And Charles has made clear, for very understandable personal reasons, that he would not, in any case, listen to them.



King Franz of Scotland?

Bonnie Prince Franz. Sounds a bit odd, but to some Scots, the present Duke of Bavaria, senior member of the German Wittelsbach family, is the man who should be at the centre of the monarchy debate, not Charles Windsor.

While the Scottish National Party leader, Alex Salmond, appears overjoyed that Tuesday's ITV gladiatorial circus left monarchism in Scotland rushing for bandages as the debate opened up old wounds, he is still pathetically clinging to a contradiction; and privately, he knows it.

In this week's admittedly unrepresentative telephone poll, 56 per cent of Scots voted against a monarchy. Thus the SNP were gifted a political window to throw out their weak and confusing policy which says that a House of Windsor monarch could remain as head of state in an independent Scotland. "Television," Mr Salmond said, "is acting as a substitute because the main parties are running away from the issue."

Following the debate, Mr Salmond claimed that the British royal family had been discredited, because they are viewed by Scots as being an integral part of the English establishment. So why does his party cling to the idea that an independent Scotland should retain the Windsors (or more accurately, the Saxe-Coburgs) as head of state? Is the SNP frightened to ditch the system that ditched the Stuarts to replace them by the Hanoverians and subsequently the descendants of the German duchy of Saxe-Gotha and Gotha?

Are the Scots trapped in history? Or are they frightened of the future? Try as you may, it is difficult to go through the few

days of the SNP's annual conference without witnessing tears, genuine tears (shed, usually through a haze of malt whisky) for the failed Jacobite cause. The romance of their songs is usually Bonnie Prince Charlie. But the real problem was James II.

In 1685, James, a Catholic convert, succeeded to the throne of Scotland, England and Ireland and embarked on a series of pro-Catholic policies. Anxiety for the future of Protestantism intensified. By 1688, with a Catholic heir already born, seven prominent subjects invited William of Orange to lead an army to

succeeded by his elder son, Franz, a 63-year-old international trade diplomat. If Alex Salmond is serious about wanting a modern, slimmed-down "European-style" monarch restricted to a minor role in an independent Scotland, one without links to the English establishment, Prince Franz would initially seem an ideal king candidate.

Mr Salmond, although an economist, claims he knows as much of Scotland's history as anyone. He should therefore know that the Scots from the 14th century have never been too concerned with their monarchs having God-given rights.

The 1320 Declaration of Arbroath, a letter sent to Pope John XXII to argue for Scotland's outright independence and for recognition of Robert Bruce as their Stuart king, crucially stated that the Scottish people had agreed to make Bruce king. But they reserved the right to throw him out "and make some other man who was well able to defend us our King".

Contracts should appeal to politicians, especially with the millennium approaching. So why not a contract for Prince Franz? He does a good job, he stays. He does a bad job, and on the power of the Arbroath declaration, the Scots simply get someone else.

A German Roman Catholic on the throne of Scotland? Surely the resident Protestant population of Scotland, especially the more militant members of the Orange Order, would object. I'm sure they

would. But if you have thrown out the Hanoverian impostors, and you want the real royal McCoy (or at least the real Stuart), Franz the First it will have to be.

After James II's failed attempt, beginning in 1689, to regain the crown, he died in 1701. His son was James Edward Stuart, the Old Pretender. And his son, Charles Edward Stuart, became the Young Pretender, fondly known as Bonnie Prince Charlie. After his failures to regain the thrones (the 1745 clan rising), the Young Pretender went back to France and later to Italy.

From Charles Emmanuel, a member of the Italian House of Savoy, the Stuart claim passed to his brother Victor, through his daughter Mary Beatrice, to the House of Habsburg-Lorraine. Mary Beatrice's granddaughter married a prince of the Wittelsbach family, then rulers of Bavaria. Although all royal power ended when Bavaria became a republic at the end of World War One, the title is still used by the family.

According to Count Christop Preysing, president of the Administration of the Dukes of Bavaria, "the family does not like talking about this matter of the Jacobite title. The prince does not want to mix himself into British royal problems." Here is clear evidence for the nationalists that this is a sensible man.

But if Bonnie Prince Franz is frightened off, deciding (sensibly) to remain in Munich, there is still no royal crisis. If the majority of Scots want to be "citizens, not subjects", the Republic of Scotland it will have to be. And the race for the presidency will be on.

Favourites? Surely, only one man stands out. He has already been a king, and a leader of men - at least on film. He has shown the true nature of his Scottish genes by spending plenty of time abroad playing golf. I give you President Sean Connery. Arise, King Sean I.

A German Catholic on the throne? Surely the Orange Order would object

He died childless in Rome in 1788, and his younger brother Henry (called Henry IX by faithful Jacobites) succeeded him. Henry, a Roman Catholic cardinal, died in 1807.

In his will, the cardinal passed the Stuart claim to the former king of Sardinia, Charles Emmanuel IV. The right derives from Charles's great-great-grandfather, who was married to Henrietta Stuart, James II's sister.

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another planet

Scientologists who accuse Germany of Nazi-style persecution beggar belief

david aaronovitch



One day - when I was a teenager - I decided to have my personality tested. For weeks I had passed the odd-looking bookshop near Goodge Street Tube station, on London's Tottenham Court Road, which advertised on-the-spot analysis. Perhaps it was the luridly illustrated science-fiction paperbacks in the window, or the insistent manner with which the man in the doorway invited youngsters (always youngsters) to come inside, that put me off. And then, in a fit of self-confidence, I went inside and filled in the interminable questionnaire about holes in my life (none, unfortunately), spiritual emptiness (also absent) and my longing for completeness (incomplete).

Someone in the shop took a quick shufti, looked me up and down and bade me farewell. And thus ended my only brush with the Church of Scientology.

Had I been slightly more promising material, I would have been slowly drawn into sessions of self-exploration. Gradually truths (as witnessed by Scientology's founder, L Ron Hubbard, sci-fi author and honorary Venusian) would have been revealed to me. I would have come to know how evil Lord Xenu filled the world with alien Engrams some 75 million years ago, how these

can be measured by a machine passing 1.5 volts through your body, how they can then be purged through a mixture of psycho-babble and mumbo-jumbo called dianetics. And how giving vast amounts of your time and money to the Church of Scientology can assist the process of becoming a Tethan - one of the elect. I might have been one of the several millions worldwide who subscribe to this nonsense.

According to a group of Hollywood writers and actors - including heroes of mine such as Gore Vidal and Dustin Hoffman - I have had a fortunate escape. For had I become an aspirant Tethan, I might then have faced a similar persecution at the hands of the modern German government to that which was experienced by many of my (never-met) Jewish relatives in the Nazi Germany of the Thirties.

This alarming charge was to be found in a full-page advertisement, "an open letter to Helmut Kohl", the German Chancellor, in Thursday's edition of the *International Herald Tribune*. "In the 1930s it was the Jews," says the ad. "Today it is the Scientologists." Then, "the world stood by in silence" as "Jews were marginalised, then excluded, then vilified and ultimately subjected to unspeakable horrors". Not any more.

Extremists of your party should not be permitted to believe that the rest of the world will look the other way. Not this time."

Joining Hoffman and Vidal in signing this remarkable accusation are Costa-Gavras, CNN's Larry King, Mario Puzo, Oliver Stone and a score or more of Hollywood's finest.

Here are some questions that I would like to ask the co-signatories. Have Scientologists' assets been seized? Have their churches been systematically burned? Is there a law forbidding intermarriage between Scientologists and Germans? Do gangs of semi-licensed thugs roam the streets beating up Scientologists? Are there embryonic concentration camps where leading Scientologists are incarcerated without proper process? Do ordinary people spit at Scientologists in cafés and restaurants? Are the cinemas filled with films depicting Scientologists as vermin? Does the Number One hit on the Kuffirstendamm this year contain the words "when Scientologist blood spurts from the knife, then I feel good"?

No. What has happened is that the democratic Germans have taken Scientology seriously (just as they take everything, from bowel movements to dental hygiene, seriously), are wondering

about how to dissuade the impressionable from joining the cult, and getting it a bit wrong. The youth wing of the CDU has tried to boycott a Tom Cruise film (because of his membership of the cult), but exercises about the same influence on the young as a line-dancer at a rave. The European Court will sort the whole thing out.

But Hollywood, with its rich schmucks, talented schmucks, political schmucks, public schlemiels and casting-couch schmorrers, with its fêted campaign endorsers, with its Cinemascope understanding of the great issues in world history (Liam Neeson Scots nationalists, Kevin Costner cowboys, Dan Day Lewis Irishmen), with its tenuous grasp on any notion of morality, Hollywood knows better. It looks at one of the two or three most democratic states in the modern world and cries "Nazis".

Actually, there is a group whose treatment by democratic societies holds a much better parallel for the Church of Scientology. This group is forbidden from practising its rituals openly, its assets are seized and burned, it is not allowed to trade, it is forced into a shadowy, criminal existence, it is not tolerated in schools, it may not be propagated. I refer, of course, to drug-taking. Druggees - the new Jews. How about it, Gore?

Personal Equity Plans

Sunday 12th January 1997

The Independent on Sunday's Business section will be publishing a comprehensive survey on Personal Equity Plans.

The survey will identify what they are and who should consider them.

It will also define the different types of PEPs available and include a table of the leading providers.

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

obituaries / gazette

Vero Wynne-Edwards

Vero Wynne-Edwards was one of the 20th century's greatest scientific naturalists and original thinkers on population regulation in animals.

The book for which he will be remembered is *Animal Dispersion in Relation to Social Behaviour* (1962), which was probably the most controversial to appear in biology in the Sixties and Seventies. At 650 pages it was the scholarly result of a lifelong consideration of the processes limiting animal numbers.

In it he proposed that animals collaborate socially for the benefit of the group, that they compete for territory and status rather than for food, with the losers patiently accepting their lot, and that animals are not, as Darwin supposed, always striving to increase their numbers but are instead programmed to regulate them. The mechanisms that prevent animals overexploiting their resources include social displays, territorial behaviour and communal roosting which evolved by group selection.

In Wynne-Edwards's view group selection operates by differential survival of populations. Those populations which showed self-restraint in reproduction and exploitation of resources survived longer than more profligate groups, so that self-regulation of population size developed during the course of evolution. This ran counter to the conventional Darwinian view of natural selection which operates by differential survival of individuals.

These ideas were robustly rejected by adherents of the still widely accepted orthodoxy that natural populations are limited by shortage of food, by predators, parasites and disease or climatic perturbations. More importantly, group selection was considered to be an implausible evolutionary process; conventional selection at the individual level would always override any self-restraint by members of a population.

Nevertheless, the principal contribution of *Animal Dispersion* was to focus attention on the mechanisms of social evolution, and ideas that have been developed over the past two decades in opposition to Wynne-Edwards's hypothesis remain prominent in much of the current thinking in sociobiology and behavioural ecology. His book was widely read by biologists of all disciplines and a précis of it, published in the *Scientific American* in 1974, sold 350,000 copies. His contribution to science was recognised in 1970 by election to the Royal Society.

Wynne-Edwards attempted to answer his critics in his second major work, *Evolution through Group Selection*, published in 1986. He reviewed new evidence which supported his ideas and considered that he had overcome many of the objections to this thesis. The book was sympathetically reviewed at length in *Nature* and *Science* although *Nature's* reviewer concluded, from Wynne-Edwards's failure to confront the tenets of the newly emerging discipline of behavioural ecology, that it was a work of advocacy. And this was the main problem - from a hypothesis, group selection had for Wynne-Edwards become an article of faith.

One colleague, dismissing these ideas to a class in Aberdeen, was chastened when at the end of the lecture, delivered in a room adjacent to an

office occupied in retirement by Wynne - as he was known to his academic friends - the door opened and Wynne invited him to listen to a long and very courteous discourse on the error of his ways.

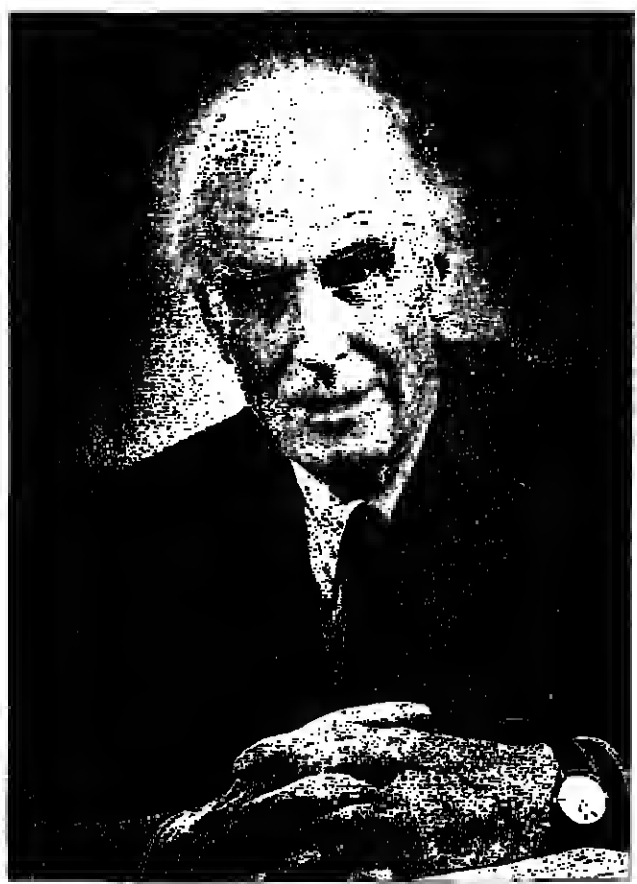
Wynne-Edwards continued to take every opportunity to convince sceptics that group selection works, despite the unfortunate reluctance of some editors to give him journal space. *Scientific American* commissioned a second article, then declined to publish it, but Wynne-Edwards continued writing, and his last paper on group selection appeared in the *Journal of Theoretical Biology* in 1993, when he was 87.

Vero Wynne-Edwards's boyhood was spent in the Yorkshire Dales where he was fascinated not only by the local fauna and flora but also by astronomy. He was a meticulous observer of animals and plants who recorded his daily observations in countless notebooks. After Rugby School, he read Zoology at New College, Oxford, in 1924-27, where he acquired a detailed knowledge of the animal kingdom from E.S. Goodrich and was greatly influenced by Julian Huxley and Charles Elton. He gained first class honours and his first appointment was as a "student probationer" at the Marine Biological Association in Plymouth, where he studied fish and crustacea but also published his "extra-curricular" observations on the movement and dispersion of wintering flocks of starlings.

These observations were made during visits from Plymouth to his fiancée Jeannie Morris, one of his Oxford classmates, who lived in Exeter. He would rise early to catch the first bus or train and station himself

at a vantage-point before sunrise to watch the first waves of starlings dispersing from roosts. By backtracking he was able to locate all the roosts in Devon. This early enthusiasm for population studies of birds was to last throughout his life.

He was then briefly on the staff of the Zoology Department at Bristol University where, in 1929, he married Jeannie, who was to become his lifelong companion and support. He soon moved to be an Assistant Professor at McGill University, Montreal. On the voyage across the Atlantic, he recorded the locations of seabirds and, as a result of this and several further transatlantic journeys by ship, he concluded that seabirds in the north Atlantic were not randomly distributed but occurred in three zones - coastal, offshore (to the edge of the continental shelf) and pelagic (deep-water). These observations were published by the Boston Society of



Wynne-Edwards: controversial view of natural selection

Natural History in 1935 and resulted in the award of the Walker Prize.

In Canada, Wynne-Edwards developed his interests in montane flora and his explanation of the postglacial distribution of plants in North America earned him fellowship of the Royal Society of Canada and a second Walker Prize.

During the Second World War, he enlisted for training in the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve but retained his post at McGill. He taught electronics to radar mechanics in the Royal Canadian Air Force and was also sent by the Fisheries Research Board of Canada to report on the fisheries resources of the Mackenzie and Yukon rivers and to establish the potential for settlement of men discharged from the armed forces after the war. This was a great adventure and rekindled his interest in fish populations.

Although they shared the responsibilities of head of department, McGill was unable to decide between Wynne-Edwards and N.J. Berrill for the Strathcona Chair of Zoology, and Wynne-Edwards decided to break the deadlock by returning to England. His children were quick to complain that this would deprive them of skiing opportunities and so he was attracted to vacancies further north.

In 1945, he was offered the Regius Chair of Natural History at Aberdeen University, a post which he occupied from 1946 until his retirement in 1974. In 1956 he initiated an important research project on the population ecology and behaviour of red grouse which is still active 40 years later. He established Culterty Field Station as a centre

for postgraduate training and research in ecology, and was instrumental in rehousing (and renaming) his Department of Natural History in a new building which was opened in 1970 and which remains one of half a dozen departments of Zoology in the UK. Wynne-Edwards also served as Vice-Principal of Aberdeen University from 1972 to 1974.

A major reshuffle of government-sponsored science took place in 1964-65. A new Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) was formed, incorporating the Nature Conservancy (NC) and the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research. After serving on the councils of the NC and NERC, Wynne-Edwards took over as NERC Chairman 1968-71. His term of office coincided with a golden age of expansion and prosperity and most of the projects the NERC Council set in motion came to fruition.

However, the NC and the NERC did not integrate well and Wynne-Edwards was unable to reconcile the opposing factions. This led in 1973 to further reorganisation, with the establishment of the Nature Conservancy Council as a quango. The research division of the former Nature Conservancy was retained within the NERC as the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology. There was much ill-feeling about this division and many of his friends saw Wynne-Edwards as one of the casualties. On retirement, he was appointed CBE for his long and distinguished service to the government and science in the UK. Many felt he deserved a greater accolade.

In Aberdeen, Wynne-Edwards was a legend as a

cross-country skier and hill walker. At 62, he held the record for the six tops of the Cairngorms, which he covered in 9 hours 34 minutes, a distance of 28 miles with 9,000 feet of climbing. At 76, a few weeks after major abdominal surgery, he was seen on his skis in Glen Tanar, and at 80 he skied down Morven with his daughter.

In the days before university research and teaching required assessment, in order to produce league tables of quality, Vero Wynne-Edwards was the epitome of scholarship and erudition. His authority, delivered with a firm yet gentle touch, commanded respect and inspired affection. As a scientist he lacked personal experience of hypothesis-testing research, but came to appreciate its importance in shedding light on group selection. Although his ideas did not gain wide acceptance, he was widely admired both as a natural historian and biological thinker.

He is survived by his wife, with whom he spent his last months in a retirement home looking out over the Dee Valley with his hionocars at the ready.

Paul Racey

Vero Copner Wynne-Edwards, natural scientist, born 4 July 1906; Assistant Lecturer in Zoology, Bristol University 1929-30; Assistant Professor of Zoology, McGill University 1930-44; Associate Professor 1944-46; Regius Professor of Natural History, Aberdeen University 1946-74; Vice-Principal 1972-74; FRS 1970; CBE 1973; married 1929 Jeannie Morris (one son, one daughter) died Banochory, Kincardineshire 5 January 1997.

Sir Peter Tennant

Peter Tennant was a linguist of genius as well as an efficient, unobtrusive organiser of secret war and a successful businessman. He went from Marlborough to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was senior modern language scholar and took a First in that subject two years later. In 1933 he was elected to a fellowship at Queens', and to a university teaching post. He spoke most European languages well, specialising in the Scandinavian tongues; his ear was so keen and his Swedish so perfect that he could not only pass in Stockholm for a native, but could imitate several regional accents as well. His first wife, whom he married in 1934, was Swedish; this helped.

So able was he that he was earmarked for secret service work if a major war broke out. Gordon Welchman the cryptographer had known him at school, and took him to codebreaking classes in the summer of 1939. When war against Hitler's Germany began that September, the Foreign Office packed him off at a few days' notice to be press attached at the British legation in Stockholm instead. He spent most of the war there, visiting England from time to time by light bomber; press attaché made admirable cover.

Charles Hambro recruited

him into the Special Operations Executive in summer 1940; they were among its earliest members. On top of his routine duties, nursing foreign and local correspondents - in the teeth of the evidence, in 1940-42 - in the belief that Great Britain was certainly going to win the war, Tennant had several less orthodox tasks.

He was not involved in the unhappy Rickman Affair, when a would-be British saboteur was arrested and imprisoned in April 1940 for possessing plastic explosives, though the Swedish police - already suspicious of him - tried to frame him as an accomplice. He helped George Binney organise two



Tennant: secret service Photograph: UPPA

important blockade-running operations, smuggling special steel vital for the British arms industry out of Sweden; he assisted SOE's Danish and Norwegian sections; he helped to distribute itching powder round visiting Germans' clothing and contraband; he helped distribute forged leaflets into Germany, and helped Sefton Delmer with material for his black broadcasts to the German armed forces. He had a spy inside the German legation, for whom he secured British nationality and a new life after the war; he narrowly missed a chance to buy the Italian fleet, in the winter of 1940-41.

He was constantly engaged in difficulties with the Swedish security authorities; and sometimes with his own Minister, (Sir) Victor Mallet, a godson of Queen Victoria's who "lost his temper with many of us but forgave and forgot very quickly". The phrase is from Tennant's illuminating book *Trenchlines of War* (1992), published in Swedish three years earlier as *Vid sidan av kriget*.

In the spring of 1945 the Foreign Office moved Tennant to Paris, where he spent five years with the title of Information Counsellor. This was, again, a propaganda task, but without the clandestine undertones of

his work in Stockholm. He left it in 1950 for a two-year spell as deputy British commandant in Berlin; he then moved into business. For 11 years he was overseas director of the Federation of British Industries, of which he was deputy director in 1963-65. For six years he was director-general of the British National Export Council, and thereafter a director of Barclays Bank.

His intellect remained lively; he was an amateur student of Ibsen, on whom he wrote a book (*Ibsen's Dramatic Technique*, 1947) and an amateur painter, as well as a yachtsman; he also belonged - among other bodies - to the Council for Industrial Design, the academic council of Wilton Park, and the Gabbatts Thring educational trust.

M. R. D. Foot

Peter Frank Dalrymple Tennant, intelligence officer, linguist and businessman; born 29 November 1910; OBE 1945; Overseas Director, FBI 1952-63; Deputy Director-General, CBI 1964-65; CMC 1958; Director-General, British National Export Council 1965-71; Ki 1972; married 1934 Helles Fellenius (one son, two daughters; marriage dissolved 1952); 1953 Galim Bosley (died 1995); died Haslemere, Surrey 22 December 1996.

Professor James Lewton-Brain

Some of the most imaginative and productive linguists and anthropologists in post-colonial Africa had previously been members of the British Colonial Service. Many managed this by becoming transatlantic scholars, bringing their field experience and bush skills to American university campuses. James Lewton-Brain was one of these, and he made the transition with relative ease, for he had always been sympathetic, humane and fair-minded; an early champion of women's rights in Africa (and elsewhere), and a subtle and eloquent speaker of Swahili. He wrote widely on both these subjects in many articles, in papers, and in several books.

Jim Brain had served in Tanganyika and Uganda for 12 years, beginning in 1951, and it was my good fortune to meet him at the end of this period, at Syracuse University in New York, in 1963, when he was finishing work on his PhD dissertation and I was on a crash course, learning Chichewa (also known as Chinyanja), a language-skill necessary to my bush-posting as a teacher in Central Africa.

The distinguished Africanist Lucy Mair had guided Jim Brain, and Brain guided me. So profound was his understanding

of the structure and sound of Bantu languages that he was able to give me the foundations for fluency in Chichewa, a language which up to then had never been taught in the United States.

His lessons stayed with me. Indeed, just before Christmas last year I was travelling down the Shire River to the Zambezi, from Malawi into Mozambique - Chichewa seems to be the lingua franca of the entire Zambezi Valley - and many times silently thanked Jim Brain for his language-teaching methods and his good advice: "Remember, the 'm' in *mbumba* has the same force as the 'm' in Fascism." Jim was the most generous of men, but he also showed me that the gift of a language is the gift of a world; he helped me travel and gave me access to a whole culture - and not just me, but all his many thousands of students.

He entered the world of scholarship obliquely, via soldiering and the Colonial Service. As a 16-year-old boy in Essex (he was born in Chigwell in 1923) he worked as a farm labourer, and at the age of 19 joined the British Army. He spent the rest of the Second World War as a scout car driver in France, Holland, Belgium and Germany; he received a commission after the war, and was sent with the Roy-



Lewton-Brain: subtle Swahili

al Tank Regiment to Palestine and Hong Kong. His work as an Agricultural Field Officer and Community Development Officer followed, and he served with distinction in Tanganyika and Uganda.

When independence was granted to the British territories of East Africa, Jim Brain became a research fellow in some of the remotest parts of Tanzania, and he decided to work for his doctorate in anthropology. He earned a PhD without ever having gained a BA; he was accepted by the Senate of London University for graduate study on the basis of his career achievements, particularly in the field of African languages.

He wrote widely on the peo-

ples of East Africa, on language and patterns of change, and the position of women; he made important contributions to our understanding of left-handedness and African witchcraft, which he called "a hardy perennial". Among his books are *The Basic Structure of Swahili* (1963) and *The Last Taboo: sex and the fear of death* (1979).

He was spirited, passionate, humorous, and a powerful intellect; he was also a great teacher. He was physically strong, and so his heart attack in December came as a shock. He was married three times: to Marian Peat (the mother of his two sons, Charles, a goldsmith, and Peter, Principal Dancer at the Ballets de Monte Carlo); to Mary Gordon, the author; and to Karen Robertson, professor of English at Vassar College, who survives him.

Paul Theroux

James Lewton-Brain, anthropologist; born Chigwell, Essex 12 September 1923; Professor, Department of Anthropology, State University of New York, New York 1967-87 (Emeritus); married 1950 Marian Peat (two sons; marriage dissolved 1973); 1974 Mary Gordon (marriage dissolved 1978); 1980 Karen Robertson; died Poughkeepsie, New York 2 December 1996.

A. H. Chaplin

Hugh Chaplin's work in organising the International Conference on Cataloguing Principles in Paris in 1961 is only his best-known contribution to international librarianship over a period of 20 years, writes Dorothy Anderson [further to the obituary by Philip Harris, 4 January].

Forty years ago cataloguing codes in use world-wide differed not only in practice but also in principles. It was Chaplin's achievement that, having identified those differences, he was able to prepare a simple document of basic principles which was acceptable internationally.

The 1961 Paris Conference was a watershed in international librarianship, and its Statement of Principles has served since as the basis for subsequent cataloguing codes.

Chaplin's work for this conference began in 1954 when a small working group of the

International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) compared rules in various cataloguing codes. An international meeting in 1959, for which Chaplin was the Executive Secretary, looked to the future and agreed the scope for the 1961 conference. Again Chaplin was

Executive Secretary; and the success of the conference was not only because of its well-defined objectives but also because it had been carefully prepared.

A smaller International Meeting of Cataloguing Experts in Copenhagen in 1969 looked at progress since 1961; it urged the

establishment of an international cataloguing secretariat to develop further work in bibliographic standards, co-ordinate work under way, publish results and produce a journal. This IFLA Cataloguing Secretariat came into being in 1971, with Chaplin as Chairman of its

Steering Committee and myself as Executive Secretary. The first issues of the journal, *International Cataloguing*, appeared in 1972.

After three years the Cataloguing Secretariat merged into the extended IFLA International Office for Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC) in

1974. Chaplin saw this as an appropriate moment to retire.

Hugh Chaplin's willingness to listen and accept other points of view was his special contribution and his strength, and, perhaps because of this, his reputation rests even higher internationally than within his own country.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

ACLAND: To Piers and Lucinda on 23 December 1996, a daughter Alice Beatrice, a sister for Harriet.

DEATHS

CLEVERLY: William Frederick, on 7 January 1997, aged 97. ex RAF: schoolmaster, artist and countryman. Much-loved husband of Doreen Betty and father to Roger, Jane, Philip, Peter and Susan. Funeral at St Peter in Chiswick, Poulshott, Wilt, 1.45pm, 17 January.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

RANDALL: Courtney and Shirley. Congratulations on your Ruby Wedding on 12.1.97. All our love. Stuart and Debbie. Birt and Linda, and grandchildren.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

HILL: Professor Dame Elizabeth. A memorial service will be held at the Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Ennismore Gardens, Knapshill, on Sunday 26 January at 12.30pm.

For Gazette, please telephone 0171-293 2011 or fax 0171-293 2010.

Changing of the Guard

TOMORROW: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment will take the Guard of Honour at Horse Guards, London, at 11.00am. The band will play 'The British Grenadiers'.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr C. H. Asby and Miss L. J. Hodgson. The engagement is announced between Louise, younger daughter of Josephine and Tony Hodgson, of Eastbourne, East Sussex, and Ceri Asby, elder son of Joan and Robin Asby, of Narberth, Pembrokeshire.

Birthdays

TODAY: Mr Graham Allen MP, 44; The Right Rev John Baker, former Bishop of Salisbury, 69; Mr John Rashleigh Belcher, thoracic surgeon, 80; Sir Alan Bowness, former Director of the Tate Gallery, 69; Miss Kathleen Byron, actress, 74; Miss Anna Calder-Marshall, actress, 50; Mr David Cecil, racehorse breeder, 54; Mr Henry Cecil, racehorse trainer, 54; Mr Jean Chrétien QC, Prime Minister of Canada, 63; Mr Jason Cornery, actor, 34; Mr Ben Crenshaw, golfer, 45; Mr Neville Duke, test pilot, 75; Miss Ann Firbank, actress, 63; Mr Barry Flanagan, sculptor, 36; Mr Andrew A. Gray, former chairman, Wellcome Foundation, 65; Mr Mehyn Hayes, actor, 62; Mr Mick MacManus, wrestler, 70; Mr Brian Moore, England rugby player, 35; Sir Alistair Morton, UK chairman, Jaguar, 59; Sir Anthony Nutting, former MP and government minister, 77; Mr Bryan Robson, former England football captain, 40; Air Chief Marshal Sir John Rogers, executive chairman, Motor Sports Association, 69; Mr Arthur Scargill, president of the National Union of

Mineworkers, 59; Mr John Sessions, actor, 44; Air Commodore Joy Tambla, former Director, WRAP, 71; Mr Rod Taylor, actor, 68; Mr Ronald Tress, economist, 82.

TOMORROW: Mr Anthony Andrews, actor, 49; Miss Hazel Aronson QC, Sheriff of London and Borders at Edinburgh, 51; Mr Michael Aspel, television presenter, 64; Sir Charles Ball Bt, company chairman, National Westminster Bank, 78; Mr P.W. Botha, former president of South Africa, 81; Sir James Bottomley, former diplomat, 77; The Hon Sir Richard Butler, former president, National Farmers' Union, 68; Dame Fiona Caldicott, consultant psychotherapist, 55; Miss Stella Cunliffe, statistician, 80; Mr Keith Dawson, former Headmaster, Haberdashers' Aske's School, 60; Mr Brendan Foster, former Olympic athlete, 49; Mr Joe Frazier, heavyweight boxer, 53; Baroness Howe, solicitor and local councillor, 50; Baroness Hilton of Eggardon, former Head of Training, Metropolitan Police, 61; Miss Anne Howells, opera and concert singer, 56; Sir Anthony McCowan, a Lord Justice of Appeal, 69; Mr Denny Milne, former managing director, BP Oil, 71; Mr James Mortimer, former general secretary of the Labour Party, 76; The Very Rev Dr John Moses, Dean of St Paul's, 58; Mr Des O'Connor, comedian, 65; Miss Louise Rainer, actress, 87; Sir John Remble, former Commissioner-General, UNRWA, 80; Sir Terence Swinton, former diplomat, 67; Sir Swinton Thomas, a Lord Justice of Appeal, 66.

The innocent must be praised, the guilty stigmatised

faith & reason

The churches are bedevilled by sexual scandal. What should the Church of England do about it? Deal dramatically with offenders, says Andrew Brown.

A fairly prominent member of the Church of England's General Synod has just sent me an article from *Penthouse* magazine. It was only published in the American edition, and describes at considerable length the antics of a group of middle-aged homosexual priests in Long Island who used to import rent boys from Brazil until one of them fell in love with one of his imports, and "married" him in a ceremony conducted in church one evening, with the priest in full drag as Madonna.

It's difficult to tell this story tastefully, and *Penthouse* didn't try very hard. The Episcopal Church of the USA has now launched a formal enquiry; and the bishop of those diocese all this happened has withdrawn for six months to seek treatment for alcoholism.

The priest who sent me all this material was not, I think, trying to prove the superiority of American *Penthouse* to its British edition. He had a theological point to make. Like most conservatives in the Church of England, he believes that the Episcopal Church of the USA epitomises everything that can go wrong with a liberal Christian denomination, and can be used to prove that liberalism in the pulpit must lead to sodomy in the pews. While the *Penthouse* article was light on theological detail, the consequences in the pews were revealingly clear.

peccably orthodox Roman Catholic priests who exploited their mistresses. Still, the *Penthouse* story does show that the Church of England has been fairly lucky in its scandals. I am reasonably certain that no priests here have ever been caught going through homosexual marriage ceremonies in drag; it may even be the case that none has even done it. In their place is the steady dribble of heterosexual scandals, which were what I had actually meant to write about until the e-mailed *Penthouse* story appeared on my screen. And they pose a difficulty for the Church beyond the mere sinfulness involved. The problem lies exactly in the fact that they are scandals: they are public dramas, which require a public resolution. This is not just an argument about hypocrisy. Whenever a priest does something ridiculous or disgusting it will be blamed on his theology; but that does not make him a hypocrite.

The original article came out in the autumn of last year. But it will undoubtedly hang around for years as an Awful Warning of what happens when you let the liberals take over. I have to say this reading of it seems to me nonsensical. The link between right belief and right behaviour is elastic at the best of times and the pathways of sin are subtle. First, there is the problem that all Christians, from St Paul onwards, or downwards, know that they have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God; and that this will happen to them again. Then, there is the still more horrible truth that these sins are usually the same ones; and that no amount of orthodoxy can by itself ensure good behaviour. There seem to have been plenty of im-

There are signs the Church is recovering its theological nerve, so to speak. But the public resolution of scandal is still something it does badly and needs to do better. Pastorally it seems to do fine. I can't imagine any Anglican clergyman anywhere being as crassly insensitive as Cardinal Winning appeared to be in the Roddy Wright scandal.

Yet the public, dramatic side of the business is still mismanaged. There needs to be a dramatically satisfying resolution to a scandal if it is not to be poisonous; it is one of the great strengths of conservatives over liberals that they understand the importance of this. The innocent must be praised, and the guilty stigmatised. The resources for any amount of public drama are still there: later this month a County Durham priest will be tried in the palace at Bishop Auckland on charges of seducing a parishioner he should have been counselling. This is rather distressing for those of us who have spent much of last year explaining that the mechanism would never be used again. It is of course a great deal more distressing for the participants.

But it is a necessary opportunity for the Church to establish, through the cruel theatre of the law courts, that priests do not abuse their position and their parishioners - or that, if they do, they stop being priests.

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INTERNATIONAL FAX				EST 1989			
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UK SMALLER COMPANIES				EST 1989			
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[illegible][illegible]

UK EQUITY INCOME			1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100	2101	2102	2103	2104	2105	2106	2107	2108	2109	2110	2111	2112	2113	2114	2115	2116	2117	2118	2119	2120	2121	2122	2123	2124	2125	2126	2127	2128	2129	2130	2131	2132	2133	2134	2135	2136	2137	2138	2139	2140	2141	2142	2143	2144	2145	2146	2147	2148	2149	2150	2151	2152	2153	2154	2155	2156	2157	2158	2159	2160	2161	2162	2163	2164	2165	2166	2167	2168	2169	2170	2171	2172	2173	2174	2175	2176	2177	2178	2179	2180	2181	2182	2183	2184	2185	2186	2187	2188	2189	2190	2191	2192	2193	2194	2195	2196	2197	2198	2199	2200	2201	2202	2203	2204	2205	2206	2207	2208	2209	2210	2211	2212	2213	2214	2215	2216	2217	2218	2219	2220	2221	2222	2223	2224	2225	2226	2227	2228	2229	2230	2231	2232	2233	2234	2235	2236	2237	2238	2239	2240	2241	2242	2243	2244	2245	2246	2247	2248	2249	2250	2251	2252	2253	2254	2255	2256	2257	2258	2259	2260	2261	2262	2263	2264	2265	2266	2267	2268	2269	2270	2271	2272	2273	2274	2275	2276	2277	2278	2279	2280	2281	2282	2283	2284	2285	2286	2287	2288	2289	2290	2291	2292	2293	2294	2295	2296	2297	2298	2299	2300	2301	2302	2303	2304	2305	2306	2307	2308	2309	2310	2311	2312	2313	2314	2315	2316	2317	2318	2319	2320	2321	2322	2323	2324	2325	2326	2327	2328	2329	2330	2331	2332	2333	2334	2335	2336	2337	2338	2339	2340	2341	2342	2343	2344	2345	2346	2347	2348	2349	2350	2351	2352	2353	2354	2355	2356	2357	2358	2359	2360	2361	2362	2363	2364	2365	2366	2367	2368	2369	2370	2371	2372	2373	2374	2375	2376	2377	2378	2379	2380	2381	2382	2383	2384	2385	2386	2387	2388	2389	2390	2391	2392	2393	2394	2395	2396	2397	2398	2399	2400	2401	2402	2403	2404	2405	2406	2407	2408	2409	2410	2411	2412	2413	2414	2415	2416	2417	2418	2419	2420	2421	2422	2423	2424	2425	2426	2427	2428	2429	2430	2431	2432	2433	2434	2435	2436	2437	2438	2439	2440	2441	2442	2443	2444	2445	2446	2447	2448	2449	2450	2451	2452	2453	2454	2455	2456	2457	2458	2459	2460	2461	2462	2463	2464	2465	2466	2467	2468	2469	2470	2471	2472	2473	2474	2475	2476	2477	2478	2479	2480	2481	2482	2483	2484	2485	2486	2487	2488	2489	2490	2491	2492	2493	2494	2495	2496	2497	2498	2499	2500	2501	2502	2503	2504	2505	2506	2507	2508	2509	2510	2511	2512	2513	2514	2515	2516	2517	2518	2519	2520	2521	2522	2523	2524	2525	2526	2527	2528	2529	2530	2531	2532	2533	2534	2535	2536	2537	2538	2539	2540	2541	2542	2543	2544	2545	2546	2547	2548	2549	2550	2551	2552	2553	2554	2555	2556	2557	2558	2559	2560	2561	2562	2563	2564	2565	2566	2567	2568	2569	2570	2571	2572	2573	2574	2575	2576	2577	2578	2579	2580	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585	2586	2587	2588	2589	2590	2591	2592	2593	2594	2595	2596	2597	2598	2599	2600	2601	2602	2603	2604	2605	2606	2607	2608	2609	2610	2611	2612	2613	2614	2615	2616	2617	2618	2619	2620	2621	2622	2623	2624	2625	2626	2627	2628	2629	2630	2631	2632	2633	2634	2635	2636	2637	2638	2639	2640	2641	2642	2643	2644	2645	2646	2647	2648	2649	2650	2651	2652	2653	2654	2655	2656	2657	2658	2659	2660	2661	2662	2663	2664	2665	2666	2667	2668	2669	2670	2671	2672	2673	2674	2675	2676	2677	2678	2679	2680	2681	2682	2683	2684	2685	2686	2687	2688	2689	2690	2691	2692	2693	2694	2695	2696	2697	2698	2699	2700	2701	2702	2703	2704	2705	2706	2707	2708	2709	2710	2711	2712	2713	2714	2715	2716	2717	2718	2719	2720	2721	2722	2723	2724	2725	2726	2727	2728	2729	2730	2731	2732	2733	2734	2735	2736	2737	2738	2739	2740	2741	2742	2743	2744	2745	2746	2747	2748	2749	2750	2751	2752	2753	2754	2755	2756	2757	2758	2759	2760	2761	2762	2763	2764	2765	2766	2767	2768	2769	2770	2771	2772	2773	2774	2775	2776	2777	2778	2779	2780	2781	2782	2783	2784	2785	2786	2787	2788	2789	2790	2791	2792	2793	2794	2795	2796	2797	2798	2799	2800	2801	2802	2803	2804	2805	2806	2807	2808	2809	2810	2811	2812	2813	2814	2815	2816	2817	2818	2819	2820	2821	2822	2823	2824	2825	2826	2827	2828	2829	2830	2831	2832	2833	2834	2835	2836	2837	2838	2839	2840	2841	2842	2843	2844	2845	2846	2847	2848	2849	2850	2851	2852	2853	2854	2855	2856	2857	2858	2859	2860	2861	2862	2863	2864	2865	2866	2867	2868	2869	2870	2871	2872	2873	2874	2875	2876	2877	2878	2879	2880	2881	2882	2883	2884	2885	2886	2887	2888	2889	2890	2891	2892	2893	2894	2895	2896	2897	2898	2899	2900	2901	2902	2903	2904	2905	2906	2907	2908	2909	2910	2911	2912	2913	2914	2915	2916	2917	2918	2919	2920	2921	2922	2923	2924	2925	2926	2927	2928	2929	2930	2931	2932	2933	2934	2935	2936	2937	2938	2939	2940	2941	2942	2943	2944	2945	2946	2947	2948	2949	2950	2951	2952	2953	2954	2955	2956	2957	2958	2959	2960	2961	2962	2963	2964	2965	2966	2967	2968	2969	2970	2971	2972	2973	2974	2975	2976	2977	2978	2979	2980	2981	2982	2983	2984	2985	2986	2987	2988	2989	2990	2991	2992	2993	2994	2995	2996	2997	2998	2999	3000
UK EQUITY INCOME	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100	2101	2102	2103	2104	2105	2106	2107	2108	2109	2110	2111	2112	2113	2114	2115	2116	2117	2118	2119	2120	2121	2122	2123	2124	2125	2126	2127	2128	2129	2130	2131	2132	2133	2134	2135	2136	2137	2138	2139	2140	2141	2142	2143	2144	2145	2146	2147	2148	2149	2150	2151	2152	2153	2154	2155	2156	2157	2158	2159	2160	2161	2162	2163	2164	2165	2166	2167	2168	2169	2170	2171	2172	2173	2174	2175	2176	2177	2178	2179	2180	2181	2182	2183	2184	2185	2186	2187	2188	2189	2190	2191	2192	2193	2194	2195	2196	2197	2198	2199	2200	2201	2202	2203	2204	2205	2206	2207	2208	2209	2210	2211	2212	2213	2214	2215	2216	2217	2218	2219	2220	2221	2222	2223	2224	2225	2226	2227	2228	2229	2230	2231	2232	2233	2234	2235	2236	2237	2238	2239	2240	2241	2242	2243	2244	2245	2246	2247	2248	2249	2250	2251	2252	2253	2254	2255	2256	2257	2258	2259	2260	2261	2262	2263	2264	2265	2266	2267	2268	2269	2270	2271	2272	2273	2274	2275	2276	2277	2278	2279	2280	2281	2282	2283	2284	2285	2286	2287	2288	2289	2290	2291	2292	2293	2294	2295	2296	2297	2298	2299	2300	2301	2302	2303	2304	2305	2306	2307	2308	2309	2310	2311	2312	2313	2314	2315	2316	2317	2318	2319	2320	2321	2322	2323	2324	2325	2326	2327	2328	2329	2330	2331	2332	2333	2334	2335	2336	2337	2338	2339	2340	2341	2342	234																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																			

Foreign Exchange Rates

STERLING		DOLLAR			D-MARK	
Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	1 month	3 months
US	10942	12 10	39 36	1000	—	—
Canada	23293	144	84 56	13829	34 33	75 73
Germany	22694	199	64 56	13829	34 33	75 73
France	30099	27 08	64 60	13829	34 33	75 73
Benelux	28093	29 68	64 60	13829	34 33	75 73
Japan	19571	21 45	62 23	13829	34 33	75 73
ECU	17379	31 08	62 23	13829	34 33	75 73
Belgium	55035	22 17	65 56	13829	34 33	75 73
Denmark	50772	22 17	65 56	13829	34 33	75 73
Netherlands	22668	17 00	64 60	13829	34 33	75 73
Ireland	1048	5 1	6 10	13829	34 33	75 73
Italy	12978	10 40	34 27	13829	34 33	75 73
Spain	22668	17 00	64 60	13829	34 33	75 73
Sweden	17371	22 10	62 20	13829	34 33	75 73
Switzerland	22336	22 10	62 20	13829	34 33	75 73
Australia	22668	17 00	64 60	13829	34 33	75 73
Hong Kong	1337	30 02	26 23	13829	34 33	75 73
Malaysia	42055	04	10 50	13829	34 33	75 73
Thailand	22668	17 00	64 60	13829	34 33	75 73
New Zealand	22668	17 00	64 60	13829	34 33	75 73
Singapore	22668	17 00	64 60	13829	34 33	75 73

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	15843	0.939	Nigeria	30.447	1770.00
Australia	16.785	1.0555	Oman	0.935	1.3850
Bahamas	10.029	1.049	Pakistan	1.000	1.0000
Bangladesh	8.394	0.748	Panama	0.79154	487.079
Egypt	3.6766	3.4781	Philippines	2.64-1.0	36.370
France	9.9672	4.715	Poland	37.114	67.020
Germany	2.2640	0.750	Portugal	6.696	16.047
Ghana	4.0867	2.6672	Russia	9.84-11	25.750
Greece	60.776	36.673	South Africa	1.2507	39.200
Guatemala	45.067	0.901	Tanzania	26.63-8	52.000
			UK	1.000	1.0000

Note: Forward rates quoted here for 12 months, calculated from spot rates. These quoted rates are not necessarily the best rates available. All rates are subject to change without notice. All rates are subject to change without notice. All rates are subject to change without notice.

Tourist Rates

as of 9/1/92

C Buys	C Buys	C Buys
Australia (Dollars)	French Francs	1,327.90
Austria (Schillings)	German Marks	106.75
Canada (Dollars)	Irish Pounds	106.75
Ceylon (Pounds)	Japanese Yen	263.00
Czech Republic (Czechs)	British Pounds	263.00
Denmark (Danish)	Hong Kong Dollars	106.75
Egypt (Pounds)	Indian Rupees	106.75
Finland (Finnish)	Indonesian Rupiah	263.00
France (Francs)	Italian Lira	106.75
Germany (Marks)	Japanese Yen	263.00
Greece (Drachmas)	Malaysian Ringgit	106.75
Hong Kong (Dollars)	Maltese Lira	106.75
India (Rupees)		
Indonesia (Rupiah)		
Italy (Lira)		
Japan (Yen)		
Malaysia (Ringgit)		
Malta (Lira)		
Mexico (Pesos)		
Netherlands (Guilder)		
New Zealand (Dollars)		
Norway (Krone)		
Philippines (Peso)		
Poland (Zloty)		
Portugal (Escudo)		
Romania (Leu)		
South Africa (Rand)		
Spain (Peseta)		
Sweden (Krona)		
Switzerland (Franc)		
Taiwan (Dollar)		
Thailand (Baht)		
United Kingdom (Pound)		
United States (Dollar)		
USSR (Ruble)		
West Germany (Mark)		
Yugoslavia (Dinar)		

Interest Rates

UK	Germany	US	Japan
Bee	Discount	Prime	Discount
France	Lombard	Discount	2-Week
intervention	Canada	Fed Funds	Belgium
3.5%	45%	5.25%	2.50%
Discount	Netherlands	Spain	Central
75%	Discount	10-Day Repo	Switzerland
Advances	Denmark	Sweden	Discount
2.50%	Discount	Repo (Avg)	Lombard
		+10%	300%
			4.25%

Country	5 yr	10 yr	yield %	Country	5 yr	Yield %	10 yr	yield %	
UK	7%	7.34	7.14	Netherlands	3.75%	4.65	6.7%	5.5%	
US	6.05%	6.80	6.50%	4%	Swiss	3.47%	3.75	3.99%	6.6%
Japan	5.5%	5.78	5%	Italy	3.25%	4.70	9.7%	7.5%	
Australia	5.5%	7.03	7.0%	Belgium	3%	4.57	6.55%	6.0%	
Germany	5.0%	4.86	6.25%	Sweden	3%	5.63	8.0%	6.24	
France	5.5%	4.55	6.5%	UK (flat)	6%	4.41	7%	6.67	

Sources: Reuters, Morningstar Research

Yields calculated on local basis. % denotes non-benchmark

Money Market Rates as of 9:57

	Overnight	7 Day	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	4 5/8	5 1/4	6	6 1/4	6 1/2	6 3/4
Storero CDs	4 1/2	5 1/4	6	6 1/4	6 1/2	6 3/4
Local Authority Depos	4 1/2	5 1/4	6	6 1/4	6 1/2	6 3/4
Discount Market Rates	6 1/2	5 3/4	6	6 1/4	6 1/2	6 3/4
Treasury Bills (Buy)	"	"	6	6 1/4	6 1/2	6 3/4
Dollar CDs	"	"	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/2	6 3/4
EUZL Linked Dep	"	"	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/2	6 3/4

Contract		Settlement price	High/Low for day	Est/Cons traded	Open interest
Long Gilt	(Mar '97)	106.31	106.05-106.05	5294	126217
German Govt Bd	(Mar '97)	100.27	100.41-99.69	22315	213399
Italian Govt Bd	(Mar '97)	128.73	128.65-127.85	56580	61957
Japan Govt Bd	(Mar '97)	124.68	124.92-124.78	1444	n/a
3 Mth Sterling	(Mar '97)	95.40	93.42-93.35	17343	87764
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Mar '97)	92.04	91.05-91.05	22733	86638
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Mar '97)	96.88	96.91-96.88	62995	215726

3 Mth Eurodollar	(Jun 97)	96.87	96.88	96.84	49308	172758
	(Mar 97)	93.30	93.40	93.35	1748	100739
3 Mth European	(Jun 97)	93.87	93.89	93.80	8845	58417
	(Mar 97)	93.41			0	N/A
3 Mth Euroswap	(Jun 97)	96.8	96.21	96.12	9003	42627
	(Mar 97)	96.09	96.13	96.06	6261	16710
3 Mth ECU	(Jun 97)	96.95	96.93	96.94	686	9686
	(Mar 97)	95.37	95.97	95.96	671	46239
FTSE 100	(Mar 97)	4066.0	4089.0	4050.0	17408	56864
FTSE 250	(Mar 97)	4586.0			0	5072

Settlement price: 4085.00	closing offer prices			Call/Put	Total/volume
Series	4000	4050	4100		
Jan	98 1/8	34 1/8	18 1/4	4.83	--
Feb	128 3/32	91 1/8	60 5/8	37 1/8	--
Mar	141 5/8	107 7/8	82 5/8	55 1/2	--
Apr	161 7/7	128 3/32	101 1/16	78 1/4	--

INDUSTRIAL METALS - London Metal Exchange						
Shouse	Cash	3 mths	Volume	LME Stocks	chg	
Aluminum HS	5,655.75	5,78.9	87,727	557,375	+	153
Aluminum AS	5,570.75	5,655.75	3,77	74,600	+	338
Copper A	229.75	229.75	24,700	54,700	+	153
Lead	6,829.50	6,90.1	16,47	164,800	+	288
Nickel	7,030.40	7,125.30	7,654	4,916	+	29
Tin	5,750.5	5,870.45	2,635	6,845	+	126
Zinc	1,044.50	1,057.8	27,793	552,000	+	2275
Settlement Conversion	PS	\$ DM	\$			
				Stock volumes & change in		

Exchange Name	London	Osaka	Frank	PRECIOUS METALS as of 07/07/97	Japan	Gold	Bar
pm 02:00z	\$	£	Coins	\$	£		\$
Platinum	30225	2130	397	224	Avogadro's	356.368	20797
Palladium	12225	720	194	14	Silver	94.95	50556
Silver spot	40825	27540	68	58	Nickel	203.78	24422
Gold Bull	35650	20835	52	37	Maple Leaf		
						Source: Metals & More	

AGRICULTURAL as of 07/07/97				
Cocoa	Coffee	Berley	Potatoes	Potatoes

LFPE	L'from	LFPE	L'stome	LFPE	L'frome	LFPE	L'frome	ATA	L'tome
Mar	872	Jan	1945	Jan	9175	Mar	5000		
May	892	Mar	1950	Mar	9450	Apr	5180	Feb	2280
Jul	912	May	1955	May	9450	May	6602	Apr	22
Oct	9708	Jul	12548	Oct	94		38		186
White Sugar		Freight		Wheat		Corn			1750 Price
LFPE	LFPE	LFPE	LFPE	LFPE	LFPE	CBOT			Cont./bushel
Mar	30440	Jan	199	Jan	9450		H Lo		580
May	33350	Mar	1405	Mar	9400	Jul	25930-25450		2593
Aug	33310	May	122	May	9600	Jul	25975-25450		25970
Nov	3481	Nov/Dec	1835	Nov	980	Jul	26190-25450		25970

Other Softs (Agricultural) as of 12/17							Source: CBOT
Unq	Mesta (Mstg)**	\$/stone	Unq	Feb	Soya Off	PL 100kg	\$9.00
Jan	Copra (1)	\$/stone	M500	Jan	Coconut Oil (1)	\$/stone	782.50
Mar	Coconut (NY)	\$/cwt	7185	Feb	Sunflower Oil	\$/stone	5200.00
Feb	Wheat	\$/cwt	68700	Jan	Rapeseed Oil	\$/stone	945.00
Feb	Rubber**	\$/cwt	910.50	Jan	Groundnut Oil	\$/stone	875.00

Options: 1000CNY = 1000gms; 1000000CNY = 1000000gms; ** European Soya: FT information/Reuters

ENERGY as of 12/17			
Brent Grade	(\$/barrel)	Gasoil	(\$/tonne)
		WTI	Products 1
			(\$/tonne)

IPE	5.30pm	°C/kg	Yr ago	IPE	°C/kg	5pm	Spot Of North West Europe			
Feb	2678	+0.35	Jan	2336	+3.50	Feb	3575	PennUnleaded	232.204	
Mar	2628	+0.28	Feb	23075	+4.75	Mar	26105	Naphtha	233.036	
Apr	23.80	+0.20	Mar	23025	+4.00	Apr	25.90	EG Galena	229.200	
Vol.	26330		Index:	26.57	Vol	23668	May	24.80	Heavy Fuel Oil	15.717

*Janice 15/2000 previous day. Year ago prices show change for year. Sources: ICIS-London Oil Apprais. 15pm prices.

COMMODITY INDICES									
*GSCI indices									
Index	Base date	+Spot	+Day	Chg	Dec 31st	% Wtd chg	Jan 31st	% Wtd chg	% Wtd chg
Index	1990=100	+29.6%	-1.2%	29.5%		+3.81	29.36	+9.2%	

Agricultural	1970=100	382.17	+7.4	221.23	+0.6	279.60	-7.02
Energy	1983=100	90.79	+2.7	55.86	+5.7	72.98	+24.58
Industrial Metals	1977=100	176.80	+1.5	168.79	+4.80	173.32	-3.50
Livestock	1970=100	189.00	+0.73	161.03	-0.60	178.55	+8.55
Precious Metals	1975=100	459.22	+0.75	403.94	2.44	504.65	-10.59

Source: Goldman, Sachs & Co. *DSCI is a trademark and service mark of Goldman, Sachs & Co. †Close as of 9 Jan. 1999

[illegible][illegible]

Contribution Equity I	27946	22258	Southern Equitable Mount	34075	32792
Commercial Union Mortgage	41414	46666	Scottish Life Mortgage	33627	32929
Commercial Union Mortgage	6680	6366	Scottish Life Mortgage	29827	29810
Commercial Union Mortg	1905	1443	Scott First Inst Blue Corp	10077	10089
Eagle Star LK Equity	585	2070	Scott First Inst W&P-PLN	10400	10401
Family Investments	10339	17198	Scottish Widows International	13529	13643
Fidelity Portfolio Managed	3722	3518	Scottish Widows Int'l	5399	5398
Fidelity Portfolio Managed	5483	5483	Scotiabank	13259	13259
Fidelity Portfolio Mgmt	2690	2169	Standard European	1063	1080
General Accounts With Profit	1866	1601	Standard For East	2066	2087
GPR Mutual Inv Dist	7803	3984	Standard Fund Interest	4259	4256
Greenwich Light Opt	6294	5894	Standard Fund Interest	8024	8024
GW Mutual	3553	3984	Stn Atlantic Equity	14924	15009

GPE Equity Acc	7281	9569	Sun Alliance Mortgage	6753	8627
GPE International Acc	1015		Sun Life Deferred Distribution	1915	
GPE Managed Acc	8114		Sun Life Dividends	5996	345
HS Savings Account	7534	8970	Sun Life Equity Acc	1045	9230
HS Shared Mortgage Pay A	6231	7901	Sun Life Managed Acc	6241	9186
Iron Life Global Mgt Plan 3	6810		Sun Life Can Community Est		
J Horrocks&Co Pension Mgt	3813	3580	Sun Life Can Contingent Udy		
Life Insurance Co of US, Acc	3813	3580	Sun Life Can Equity Loan Est	6531	8929
Lawrenceburg Life, Acc 3	6242	6553	Sun Life Can Maple Leaf Mgt Acc	4467	4782
Lawrenceburg Life Equity Acc	6242	6553	TSG Equity	4987	4821
Legal & General Equity Acc	1452	1452	TSG Investments	2857	2856
Legal & General International Acc	2005	2002	TSG Mortgage	2770	3598

business & city

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BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

British banks face exclusion from Target system

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

The first concrete evidence that the UK's lukewarm attitude to European monetary union (EMU) is damaging British interests was revealed by a new report yesterday.

Despite strong Bank of England lobbying, the European Monetary Institute has left the way open for the exclusion of UK banks from full access to funds under the single currency through restrictions on Target, the planned payments system for euros.

In an exclusive interview with *The Independent*, Alexandre Lamfalussy, president of the EMI, said: "To be candid, if the UK stays out of EMU and does not participate at the beginning, a number of things will escape British influence."

The EMI said yesterday in a long-awaited report on monetary policy under the single currency that the decision to restrict access to Target for non-member countries would be left to its successor, the European Central Bank. The ECB will be composed only of member countries, and the French

and Germans have made clear their absolute determination not to permit London-based banks equal access to euro funds from the new central bank if Britain does not join.

Mr Lamfalussy warned: "The ECB will have the technical possibility of not granting unlimited credit. If the UK is not there, you will have no voice in that."

In a statement the Bank of England noted only that the debate about non-member access to euro funds within the trading day had been left "unresolved".

So too was the question of whether the ECB will impose minimum reserve requirements on member banks, another proposal the Bank of England has steadfastly opposed.

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor who was speaking in Japan yesterday, insisted that not joining EMU would not harm London's interests. "I don't think staying out of EMU poses any threat to the predominant position of the City of London," he said.

But City experts were concerned that the two obstacles had not been removed. "It is worrying that a key issue like the

Halifax members to receive £1,300

Jill Treanor
Banking Correspondent

More than 8 million members of Halifax can expect an average share payout of around £1,300 when the building society floats on the stock market in June. Each qualifying member, including savers and borrowers, will receive a minimum of 200 free shares, which are estimated to be worth between 390p and 450p each.

Around 4.1 million people will be entitled to this basic distribution while the rest will receive an additional hand-out of up to 1,181 shares depending on the balance in their accounts on two key dates.

An additional distribution of shares will be paid to members who had a total balance of at least £1,000 on 25 November 1994 and 24 February 1997. The additional shares will be worked out from the lower of the two balances.

The maximum will be made to savers with more than £50,000 in their accounts. Savers and borrowers are entitled to two payments.

The share price valuations are made by Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, the merchant banking adviser to Halifax, on the assumption that the society was floated on 16 December 1996. It estimates the society would have had a market capitalisation of £10.4bn to £12bn on that date.

Rob Thomas, building society analyst at UBS, the investment bank, said Halifax was being cautious about its payouts. "My mid point would be their top end," he said.

Over the next few days members of Halifax will receive a 172-page transfer document to which Mike Blackburn, chief executive of the society, urges them to vote in favour of the flotation.

"Halifax's conversion will represent the largest single extension of private share ownership ever witnessed in the UK," Mr Blackburn said.

Members can vote by post by 17 February or at the special general meeting in Sheffield on 24 February.

More than 50 per cent of the society's investing members, over 3.5 million, must vote in

favour for the flotation to proceed. This is a greater proportion than required by the other societies which intend to become banks, such as Alliance & Leicester and Woolwich, because Halifax is taking a slightly different route to flotation, principally because it has waived its right to a five-year protection against being taken over.

The flotation is likely to receive enough votes to go ahead although it is facing some opposition from Halifax Action Group. "This [flotation] is being done largely to benefit those in the City who have raked in enormous fees and board members whose salaries have and will increase enormously," said Serge Lourie, a chartered accountant who is running the action group and standing for election to Halifax's board.

Mike Ellis, banking and savings director at Halifax, said the board was aiming to avoid such accusations. "We're not taking share options to distance ourselves from those comments," he said.

Halifax is not establishing executive share options at conversion but intends to introduce a long-term incentive scheme in 1999. Directors of the society participate in a short-term and medium-term bonus scheme.

The medium-term one will not pay out unless Halifax completes its conversion process.

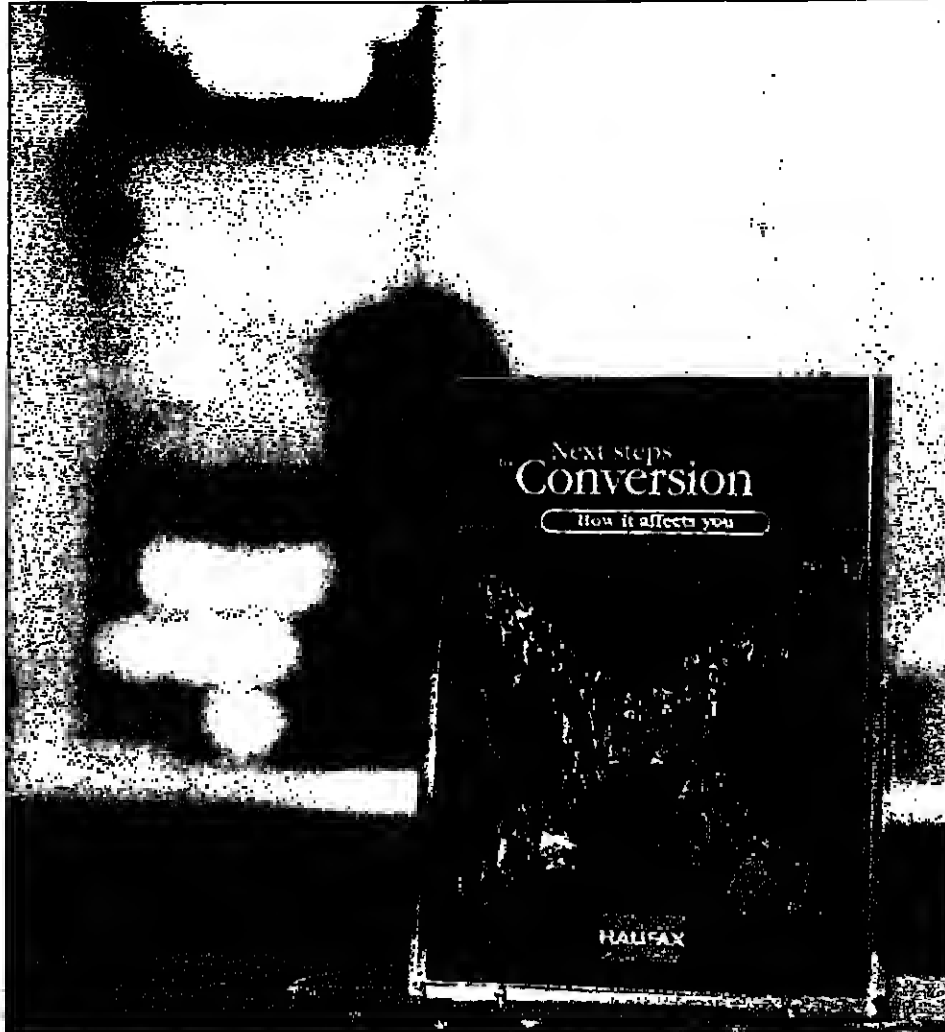
The directors have waived their rights to the free shares being distributed to employees of the society and will only take those shares they are entitled to as borrowers or savers.

Mr Blackburn, who earned a total of £405,000 in the year to January 1996, will receive 707 free shares.

There is a cash bonus for members aged under 18 because they are ineligible to vote. It is approximately 9.4 per cent of balances in share accounts.

To cope with the first day of trading Halifax will ask members in April or May to indicate whether they intend to sell their shares. It will offer members keeping their shares three options - placing them in a nominee account, receiving the share certificates, or putting the shares into a PEP account.

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Gearing up for a conversion: Many Halifax shareholders have already decided how they will spend their windfalls

Photograph: Jason Bye

Lucky savers head for the sun

The cold winter weather could well lead to many Halifax members deciding to spend their windfall on lapping up some sun this summer.

"In January I'm feeling in the doldrums. If I'm sensible I'll take a holiday," said Lily Armitage, a secretary from Bexleyheath and Halifax member.

But it could be a close call. "We'll probably spend it on our home. We have a very old Victorian home," she said.

Kay Hamilton, who works as a secretarial assistant in the chairman's office at Halifax in London, intends to cash in some of her shares to take herself and her two grown-up sons on holiday in the summer.

"I'll keep the shares from the employee scheme, though," the 47-year-old divorcee said. Ms Hamilton, who lives in Putney, is a self-confessed carphage and will get free shares from the forthcoming Woolwich and Alliance & Leicester flotations.

Other Halifax members, such as Elaine Arter, 45, of Hornchurch, intend to hold on to their shares. "We don't need the money right now," she said. However, she thought her two adult children were more likely to spend the proceeds of their shares.

Tracey Pollard, 26, from Leyton, will keep her shares, as will Russell Walling, a 36-year-old software development manager from Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire. "I'll keep them. It's probably a good thing to have shares in the banking sector," Mr Walling said.

However, he had some reservations about the flotation. "Building society borrowers and savers will lose out in the long term," he said.

Jeremy Brazil, a 34-year-old insurance underwriter from Reading, has a mortgage with Halifax but took it out too late to receive free shares. He is eligible for the Woolwich payout, however. "We've just moved house. It cost an arm and a leg and we'll use it for a holiday," said Mr Brazil, who is married with a son.

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Warning by Argos muddies sales picture

Tom Stevenson
City Editor

A confusing December retail picture was further muddled yesterday by disappointing sales figures and a profit warning from catalogue retailer Argos.

Chiming with a doleful statement earlier in the week from Marks & Spencer, Argos's 4 per cent growth in like-for-like turnover paled in comparison with the 32 per cent rise in new year sales announced yesterday by John Lewis.

A clutch of trading statements from retailers and retail related stocks such as H&M, Sports and Courtaulds Textiles, followed this week's weaker-than-expected retail trades survey.

The Confederation of British Industry in its December Distributive Trades survey, said that although sales volumes were well up on a year earlier, they fell below retailers' expectations for the period.

The emerging picture has been one of winners and losers, with big-ticket consumer durable items selling better than fashion, footwear, toys and gifts. "Christmas was patchy. Not every retailer enjoyed the benefit of increased sales," said Clive Vaughan at retail analysts Verdict. "People had expected a boom and they've not got a boom."

According to Argos, sales in the 35 days up to and including Christmas Eve were up 4 per cent but the company warned that 1996 profits were unlikely to exceed the lower end of market expectations. Analysts had pencilled in profits of between £140m and £152m for the year to December. Argos's shares tumbled 10.5p to 623.5p.

Other retailers followed suit yesterday as the market fretted that the nascent consumer boom was benefitting less than others. Marks & Spencer slipped 17p to 465.5p despite a statement from Courtaulds Textiles which said it had experienced strong demand from M&S, one of its biggest customers.

Next slipped 22.5p to 529p, House of Fraser was 5.5p off at 141p and WH Smith closed 16.5p to 443.5p.

Nick Bubb, retail analyst at Mees Pierson Securities, said he had expected like-for-like sales growth for Argos over the Christmas period of at least 7 or 8 per cent. He said Argos's Christmas figures made Dixons' trading figures over earlier this week look more impressive.

Dixons said in the eight weeks to 4 January sales grew 8 per cent like-for-like, from a year earlier. Despite that, its shares fell 27p to 51.1p last Wednesday on the day of the announcement and yesterday closed a further 13.5p lower at 494p.

Tokyo plunge sets tone for market jitters

Tom Stevenson
and Diane Coyle

Markets around the world experienced another volatile session yesterday after Tokyo set a jittery tone with a 770-point plunge. Higher-than-expected employment figures in America sent Wall Street into an early downward spiral, catching London in the backwash despite receding fears here of an early rise in UK base rates.

Stock markets bore the brunt of investors' nerves, but in the US Treasury bonds also tumbled after a government report showed the unexpected rise in jobs last month was increasing wages, fanning inflation and bringing closer a rise in the cost of borrowing. The Labor Department said 262,000 jobs were created last month, more than the 200,000 economists had expected and a worrying inflationary pointer, analysts said.

Worries that the cost of American money would rise soon helped push the yield on 30-year government bonds to their highest level since September. "Slowly but surely the market's beginning to factor in a hit of a tightening," said one US fund manager.

The fall in Tokyo took the slide in the Nikkei index to more than 2,000 points in the year's first full week of trading - according to one estimate a sum half the size of Canada's whole economy has been wiped off Japanese stocks over the past week.

At 17,303.65, the benchmark Japanese index has fallen more than 10 per cent in only five trading sessions to its lowest level for 17 months. It has been the largest five-day decline since 1990 when the Japanese bubble economy burst and the stock market started a fall that wiped out half its value in less than two years.

Selling in Tokyo has reached panic proportions according to some market observers with eight shares falling for every one that has risen. "They're selling the good as well as the bad," said one Japanese fund manager. Another added: "There are so many problems with the economy that have not been solved. The market is melting down."

In London, shares were hit by an early 67-point fall on Wall Street, despite a later recovery in the US market, and an expected downturn assessment of December retail sales from the Confederation of British Industry, which was compounded by a profit warning from catalogue retailer Argos.

The FTSE 100 index closed 30.4 points lower at 4,056.6 as the Wall Street drag was tempered by sluggish manufacturing output figures which appeared to increase Kenneth Clarke's chances of getting to the general election without the need to raise interest rates further. They showed an unexpected drop in manufacturing output last month.

Some City experts blamed the

fall on the recent strength of the pound for the setback. But the Treasury and other City economists said the decline was probably a blip, as it was too soon for sterling's rise to have had much impact.

The pound dipped in reaction to the fresh hopes that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would get away with leaving the cost of borrowing unchanged before the election. It fell by a penny to close at DM2.6635.

Manufacturing output fell 0.5 per cent during December, with declines across a wide range of industries. Higher energy output due to bad weather took total industrial production up 0.4 per cent during the month.

Market Report, page 20

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Market Report, page 20

£684m Gehe bid set to clinch Lloyds battle

Magnus Grimond

Gehe, the German pharmaceutical distributor, yesterday looked close to clinching the 12-month bid battle for Lloyds Chemists after raising its all-cash offer to £684m.

The bidder moved into the market to scoop up just under 21 per cent of Lloyds' shares soon after the announcement that the offer was being raised from 500p to 525p a share and made final.

The move comes a week before the final deadline for higher offers, but Dieter Kammerer, Gehe chairman, said the delay was damaging the business. Since the start of the

bid last January, Gehe estimated the value of Lloyds had declined by around 10 per cent. Adding that back to the revised terms, would value them at more like 500p to 570p a share, he claimed. There was no word from rival bidder UniChem yesterday but analysts said it would be difficult for it to top Gehe's terms.

Shares in Lloyds jumped 14p to 526.5p, but UniChem's were also 10p higher at 256p on expectations that it would not increase its offer. If UniChem does bow out, directors could make £4.3m in option profits and pay-offs, while the stake belonging to Allen Lloyd, chairman, could be worth £32m.

Market Report, page 20

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STOCK MARKETS									
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	Yield (%)	Index	Close	Day's change
FTSE 100	4057.00	-0.50	-0.0	4118.50	3632.30	3.81	Nikkei	17303.65	-770.00
FTSE 250	4517.70	-14.60	-0.3	4568.60	4015.30	3.47	Dow Jones	8900.00	-100.00
FTSE 350	2034.10	-1.80	-0.1	2043.80	1816.80	3.74	Hang Seng	10000.00	-100.00
FTSE SmallCap	2229.15	+2.94	+0.1	2244.36	1954.06	3.02	Hong Kong	13196.11	-256.82
FTSE All-Share	2006.15	-1.29	-0.1	2013.66	1791.95	3.68	Frankfurt	2892.63	-13.71
New York	5625.67	+76.19	+1.1	6000.66	5032.94	2.03			
Tokyo	18073.87	-806.51	-3.2	22666.80	18073.87	0.84			
Hong Kong	13196.11	-256.82	-1.9	13530.95	10204.87	3.09			
Frankfurt	2892.63	-13.71	-0.5	2909.91	2253.36	1.99			

Statistics as of 10 January

INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling	UK medium gilt	US long bond	Money Market Rates	Bond Yields	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term (%)	Year Ago	Long Bond (%)
5.84	7.00	7.64	5.84	7.00	7.64	5.84	7.00	7.64	7.64
5.44	5.97	6.53	5.44	5.97	6.53	5.44	5.97	6.53	6.53
5.44	0.47	2.51	5.44	0.47	2.51	5.44	0.47	2.51	2.51
3.09	3.06	6.87	3.09	3.06	6.87	3.09	3.06	6.87	6.87

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CURRENCIES									
£/\$	£/DM	£/¥	£/A\$	£/NZ\$	£/S\$	£/HK\$	£/KRW	£/TWD	£/THB
1.72	2.28	160.00	0.68	0.58	0.70	7.75	170.00	20.00	30.00
1.72	2.28	160.00	0.68	0.58	0.70	7.75	170.00	20.00	30.00
1.72	2.28	160.00	0.68	0.58	0.70	7.75	170.00	20.00	30.00

Market Report, page 20

Booker needs extra £25m to close sites

Patrick Toohar

Shares in Booker fell sharply yesterday after the food distribution company warned it would take a further £25m charge to close some food distribution sites following last November's £264m purchase of warehouse retailer Nurdin & Peacock.

The charge, which comes on top of £52m already taken against the N&P acquisition, sent the shares 17.5p lower at 381.5p. In a trading statement Booker said N&P's sales over the Christmas period were 6 per cent lower than the previous

year, though profits were slightly higher than expected.

Booker, the UK's largest cash and carry group, said group sales for the year rose 3 per cent on a like-for-like basis while sales over the Christmas period were slightly ahead of last year.

Booker plans to take the restructuring charge against its 1996 results because of rationalisation of N&P's depot system. The company said it had identified opportunities to use space at N&P depots for its foodservice business, allowing the rationalisation of Booker's network of Foodservice sites.

BRIEF

Northern Rock...
The Spanish government...
The South Korean company...
The German company...
The UK's largest cash and carry group...
The food distribution company...
The warehouse retailer...
The N&P acquisition...
The restructuring charge...
The depot system...
The foodservice business...
The rationalisation of Booker's network...
The Foodservice sites...



JEREMY WARNER

Since he sold his original, core music business to EMI four years ago, Mr Branson has struggled to find anything that comes close to filling the gap.

Virgin phenomenon rides on a lot of hot air

Is Virgin really the only internationally recognised global brand to have emerged from Britain over the past 20 years? In a recent article for *The Economist*, Richard Branson, Virgin's founder and guiding light, came close to making this claim. Mr Branson's inflated attempt to circumnavigate the globe in a balloon has reminded us all that in some respects at least, he is probably right. Furthermore, the inference he draws from it – that this is a quite damning indictment of the British economy – is right too.

While it is true that there are still quite a lot of born-in-Britain brand names waltzing around the world – BP, Shell, Unilever, ICI, the BBC and even British Airways – these are not recent creations. There is nothing that has come out of Britain since the war to compare with BMW, Nike, McDonalds or Sony.

Except, perhaps, Virgin. The pity of the Virgin phenomenon, however, is that this is precisely what it is – more of a phenomenon than a brand and one, moreover, that feeds almost entirely off the publicity-seeking antics of one man. There is no definable product behind Virgin that sustains it as a brand. There is no ultimate driving machine, or Walkman, or fashion sponsor. Many and varied are the attempts to stamp established products with the Virgin name, but this is a rather different thing. And although the Virgin name is hugely well known, it is

also the case that for the time being its fame is unmatched by its substance.

In that sense Virgin is a quintessentially British thing. A bit like the Beatles, everyone's heard of Virgin, but it is hard to know whether this fame generates any tangible benefit. In other words, is not the Virgin phenomenon just a lot of bluster and front, mostly (forgive the analogy) hot air?

I read somewhere that Mr Branson's balloon trip generated well over £300m of free publicity for the Virgin "empire", or more than Pepsi Cola spent worldwide on its much-criticised relaunch. I find this rather hard to believe, especially since the exercise was a damp squib. But let's accept that even disappointing publicity is good publicity, especially when it is free. Free publicity for what though?

Since he sold his original, core music business to EMI four years ago, Mr Branson has struggled to find anything that comes close to filling the gap. These days Virgin amounts to a small but highly successful and profitable airline, a small and moderately successful soft and alcoholic drinks business, a small and entirely unproven financial services operation, the Virgin megastores (reasonably profitable in the UK, unprofitable overseas), a relatively successful film and entertainment division, a couple of rail franchises, a stake in the high-speed Channel Tunnel rail link project, an even smaller

stake in Eurostar, a stake in MGM cinemas in the UK, now rebranded Virgin, and... yes, that's about it.

With total annual sales of approaching £1.5bn, this is obviously no small enterprise. Furthermore, at the moment it is reasonably profitable. Pre-tax profits this year should amount to about £100m. The vast bulk of this, however, is Virgin Atlantic. The rest wouldn't even qualify Virgin for the FTSE 350. By international standards, it is tiny. What is more, Mr Branson's hotchpotch of entirely unrelated interests could hardly be a more unfashionable form of corporate organisation, in stock market terms at least – this on the not-unreasonable logic that people who are good at running airlines are unlikely to be good at financial services too.

Mr Branson believes received wisdom of this sort to be a canard, and in an entrepreneurial but small-scale way he is proving his point. His comparison of Virgin with the Japanese Keiretsu is an entirely bogus one, however. While it is true that Mitsubishi, one of the largest Keiretsu (family of companies) lends its name to a whole range of business interests from cars to textiles and financial services, the link between these companies is not nearly as strong as he would have us believe. Internationally it is not recognised at all. John Smith of Sunbrite might wish to buy a Mitsubishi car but he is highly unlikely to bank with them too.

Virgin is a quite different sort of "family". Both in ownership and management terms, it is dominated by just one man, Mr Branson is the cement that holds Virgin together and drives it forward. Without him, it would very rapidly fall apart.

But let's not be churlish about this. Virgin is responsible for a string of entrepreneurial successes, some of which have also pushed out the barriers of product development. There is nothing particularly remarkable about this though. Rather, Virgin's uniqueness is derived from the fact that such a disparate collection of quite small businesses could command such strong international recognition. This is undoubtedly a wonderful and heroic achievement. But Virgin as a panacea for Britain's economic woes, a new global brand for the next century? I'm going to take some convincing.

Any Chancellor who took 10p off the basic rate of income tax in present circumstances would be accused of recklessness to the point of criminality. That, however, is roughly what the free share handouts from demutualising building societies are going to deliver to the British masses over the next year – more if the stock market flotation of the Norwich Union and other likely life assurance demutualisations are taken into account. In total well over £20bn of new money will be entering the economy. If only a half

of that windfall is realised (with the rest left stashed away in the bottom drawer) we are still talking about a very substantial boost to consumer spending.

Is this really the windfall we all think? For those without qualifying building society accounts the effect will almost certainly be financially negative. Even for the 15 million members who benefit directly, the net effect may not be particularly advantageous. This is because pump-priming consumer spending on this scale, even when it is not being done by the Government, must inevitably result in higher interest rates. Quite how much higher interest rates will be by the end of the year as a result of all this is anyone's guess, but higher they certainly will be. Borrowing costs and mortgages will be that much more expensive than if the Halifax, Alliance & Leicester, the Woolwich and others had not floated.

Furthermore, it may well be that demutualisation will in itself lead to higher long-term borrowing costs and less competitive deposit rates. After flotation, the main priority of building societies will be to serve shareholders. That means hundreds of millions of pounds in dividend payments that would otherwise go towards keeping interest rates. Pressure to improve short-term returns yet further by milking the customer will be intense. All of which goes to show that there is no such thing as a free lunch.

£500m British Gas demerger costs shock City

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

British Gas yesterday surprised investors and analysts by announcing a further £500m of restructuring provisions, inflated by huge redundancy costs, in preparation for next month's demerger of its supply business, which will be called Centrica.

The write-offs, disclosed in more than 200 pages of documents to shareholders outlining details of the demerger, will more than wipe out the company's annual profits for 1996. They centre on top of expected provisions announced yesterday of £341m to cover the recent deals with oil giants BP and Mobil to renegotiate some of British Gas's £30bn worth of long-term North Sea "take-or-pay" contracts to buy gas at inflated prices.

British Gas had already announced exceptional charges of £457m in the first nine months of last year to cover losses on its take-or-pay contracts. Based on analysts' forecasts, the total write-offs would plunge the company into losses of about £400m when the results for 1996 are announced on 27 February, compared with profits in 1995 of £607m.

The group said the £500m charges would cover further redundancy payments, write-downs on the value of British Gas's huge property portfolio and the costs of the demerger

process itself, estimated at £55m. Roy Gardner, chief executive designate of Centrica, defended the scale of the write-offs, which he maintained were in line with the company's existing "conservative" accounting policy.

A company source said the provisions also reflected the fact that 10,000 more staff had taken voluntary redundancy than anticipated. The original £1.65bn restructuring programme unveiled three years ago planned for staff cuts of some 25,000; but in recent months more employees have left British Gas as morale in the company slumped.

Last night analysts were still coming to terms with the write-offs and attempting to put a value on Centrica and the remaining half of the business, which will be renamed "BG plc". One said: "These provisions are much bigger than we'd expected. We had assumed there would be further write-offs of around £200m or £300m but not on this scale." British Gas also dampened speculation yesterday of further imminent deals to renegotiate take-or-pay contracts. Following the agreements with BP and Mobil, representing around 20 per cent of the total liabilities, analysts had been expecting similar arrangements with Shell and other leading North Sea oil producers.

However, Mr Gardner said

one of his first tasks after the demerger of Centrica, to be completed on 17 February, would be to review the question of further take-or-pay deals.

Centrica, which will own British Gas's vast Morecambe Bay gas fields, takes over the liabilities to buy gas at around 19p a therm, much higher than current market prices of 15p a therm.

However in recent months gas prices on the spot markets have been rising, alleviating some of the pain.

Mr Gardner explained: "We've progressed with a number of other deals but now I want to pause for a while. One parameter is the rise in the gas price, though clearly we still have a problem."

The demerger documents confirmed that Richard Giordano, British Gas chairman, will step down earlier than expected as chairman of Centrica at the end of June and will be replaced by Sir Michael Perry, former head of Unilever, the Anglo Dutch foods and detergents group.

Following his departure, Mr Giordano's salary of £450,000, unchanged since his arrival at British Gas in 1994, would be halved, reflecting his diminished role as non-executive chairman of BG.

Under the demerger, existing British Gas shareholders will receive one Centrica share for every share they already own.



Mary Walz: "Working with the SFA has been arduous and protracted. I'm glad it's over"

Walz escapes fine over Barings collapse but must pay £5,000 costs

Jim Treanor
Banking Correspondent

Mary Walz, the former Barings executive, has been reprimanded by the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA) and ordered to pay £5,000 towards the regulator's costs. However, she has escaped a fine and has not been banned from working in the City.

Ms Walz avoided taking her case to a tribunal by agreeing last year to settle one charge brought by the SFA. Publication of the settlement details was delayed while the SFA waited to

discover if Ron Baker, her boss at Barings, would appeal a tribunal decision against him.

"Working with the SFA has been arduous and protracted and I'm glad it's finally over," Ms Walz said yesterday. An industrial tribunal refused to grant her the £500,000 bonus she was awarded just hours before Barings collapsed in 1995.

The SFA has banned other Barings executives, including Peter Norris, the former chief executive of the bank, from working in the City. It intends to press on with two remaining tribunals in the Barings affair

against Ian Hopkins and James Bax.

However, the SFA has failed to discipline the former chairman, Peter Baring, and his deputy, Andrew Tuckey.

The SFA said Ms Walz accepted that between December 1994 and February 1995 she had failed to act with due skill, care and diligence.

"She did not properly monitor the proprietary trading activity known as the switching business in that she did not appreciate some alerting factors that occurred during this period," the SFA said.

BA hits back over rivals' link-up claims

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

British Airways and American Airlines yesterday launched a vigorous defence of their proposed alliance, hitting back at rival carriers' claims that it would create an unprecedented monopoly on some of the most lucrative transatlantic routes.

The two airlines were filing their joint application to the US Department of Transportation requesting formal approval for the alliance, which would give them some 60 per cent of flights between the UK and the US.

The link-up, which involves pooling revenues, timetables and facilities, depends on the successful outcome of "open skies" talks between the two governments aimed at liberalising access to Heathrow Airport. Negotiations are due to restart in three weeks' time.

British Airways insisted it was confident it would get the alliance approved by UK competition authorities. The Office of Fair Trading has given the deal its provisional approval on condition that the partners give up 168 lucrative runway slots at Heathrow. However, rival airlines have attacked the conditions as far too lenient. They would still leave British Airways and American with some 3,000 slots at the airport.

The alliance partners also submitted their response yesterday to the OFT report, claiming the conditions recommended were "excessive". But David Holmes, BA's director of regulatory affairs, told a news conference in Washington

that the company was prepared to agree to give up some of its slots, but only on condition that it was compensated for the loss at a fair market value.

He continued: "I won't disguise the fact that the regulatory process in the UK has taken longer than expected. However, there are no competition problems that cannot be solved by BA agreeing to undertakings."

Rivals have stepped up their campaign against the alliance in their own submissions to the OFT, claiming that British Airways' plan to sell the slots would give the company a huge "war chest" which it would use to put other carriers out of business. Experts have estimated the 168 slots at Heathrow, equivalent to 12 round-trips a day, would net £180m.

The whole issue of slot trading has become more confused this week after news emerged that the European Commission has concluded that the practice is illegal under EC rules. The admission by sources close to Neil Kinnock, the transport commissioner, threatens to undermine British Airways' negotiating position. The EC is still investigating the alliance and has insisted that it needs European approval before it can operate.

Yesterday, a spokesman for American said the alliance would be the spur to a "dramatic" increase in competition in the UK-US airline market as new carriers gained access to Heathrow. "We are flabbergasted by constant repetition of this nonsense about a monopoly," he said.

IN BRIEF

• Northern Rock, the building society planning a £1bn stock market flotation in the autumn, plans to spend up to £40m expanding its nursing home activities. The deal involves Kingsclear Homes, a private, Midlands-based operator with 23 nursing homes and 1250 beds. It will add to the 15 homes and 730 beds already run by Northern Rock's Regency Care Homes subsidiary. Northern Rock is one of four building societies planning to abandon its mutual status and convert to a bank this year, a process which will mean shares being handed out to an estimated 15 million people.

• The Spanish government yesterday gave the green light for the privatisation of the remaining 21 per cent stake in the former state-owned communications giant Telefonica in Spain's biggest privatisation operation to date, writes Elizabeth Nash in Madrid. Nearly 200 million shares are to be offered for public sale on 20 January, twice the amount already on the market. The Spanish stock market has soared to record levels in recent days in anticipation of the bonanza, with double the usual volume of share dealing recorded on Thursday. The government yesterday approved measures intended to guarantee that more than half the forthcoming packet of shares remains in Spanish hands.

• At least two South Korean companies said they were talking with Airbus Industrie about joining its jumbo jet project aimed at breaking Boeing's monopoly in large airliners. Samsung Aerospace Industries and Korean Air said they and several other companies were involved in talks about an aircraft capable of carrying at least 550 passengers. Airbus confirmed it was holding talks with South Korean companies.

• Volkswagen's "defeat" at the hands of General Motors was greeted with euphoria on the Frankfurt stock exchange yesterday, propelling the German company's shares to an all-time high. VW shares hit DM725 in the morning before closing at DM708.

• David Morris, chairman of Northern Electric, which lost its independence over Christmas in a bitter £782m hostile takeover battle, yesterday urged any outstanding investors in the company to accept the 650p-a-share all-cash offer from US-controlled CE Electric. CE has received acceptance from shareholders speaking for 79.8 per cent of the company.

• Grundig has appointed Credit Suisse First Boston to help it find new partners and investors following the decision by Dutch electronic giant Philips to cut links with the German consumer electronics group. Grundig said Philips' decision to restrict its role as a passive minority shareholder was surprising.

• Loedex, the Midlands-based engineering group, plans to move from a full listing to the junior Alternative Investment Market. The company also said it would seek shareholder approval to buy back up to 10 per cent of the issued share capital. The proposed transfer is subject to shareholder approval at an extraordinary general meeting to be held on 4 February.

Spot winners in £15bn society bonanza

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

Windfall winners	
Halifax	390-450p
Dixons	496p
Kingsfisher	639.5p
MFI	190.5p
Altrours	823.5p
Reg Vardy	315.5p

Anyone who thinks the economy is not set for a buoyant 1997, driven by strong consumer spending, has not reckoned with the £15bn to be released from the Woolwich and Halifax building society flotations, details of which emerged this week.

Together with the proposed flotations of Norwich Union, Alliance & Leicester and Northern Rock, an estimated £25bn of money that people had not previously counted on will be burning a hole in consumers' pockets.

This represents an unprecedented boost to the national economy, with very uncertain consequences. They are uncertain because nobody knows how much of those windfalls will be squandered away and how much blown in an orgy of "what the hell" consumerism. The balance will depend on how good people feel about their finances generally, but against a backdrop of rising house prices, low interest rates and falling unemployment it would be surprising if an awful lot of the cash were not splurged.

Another important factor is likely to be the size of the payouts from Woolwich and Halifax. With payouts averaging about £1,300, many people will take the view that such an amount is hardly going to transform their pension fund but will buy a very nice holiday, or that multi-media PC they've been umming and aching about for the past year or so. It might make a good down-payment for

For everyone else, attention should focus on which sectors and companies are likely to be the biggest beneficiaries of the largesse. To answer that question we have drawn up a portfolio of

likely building society bonanza winners.

Dixons said earlier this week that computers had been one of its best-selling items and there is no reason to suppose that trend is going to reverse this year. As owner of PC World, one of the leading computer superstores, Dixons should do well.

A £1,300 payout will go a long way to replacing a household's washing machine and dishwasher, so expect sales of white goods to be strong at Comet, which is owned by B&Q to Woolworth's group Kingsfisher. Furniture should sell well at MFI, where profits are on a strong recovery track.

Our other hunch is that Halifax and Woolwich shares will be sold to pay for holidays and new cars. In these sectors we are

going for quality, even if the shares already discount much of the good news. Altrours is the best of the bunch in a recovering holiday industry and Reg Vardy looks good value after strong profits growth this week.

Brokers miss the party

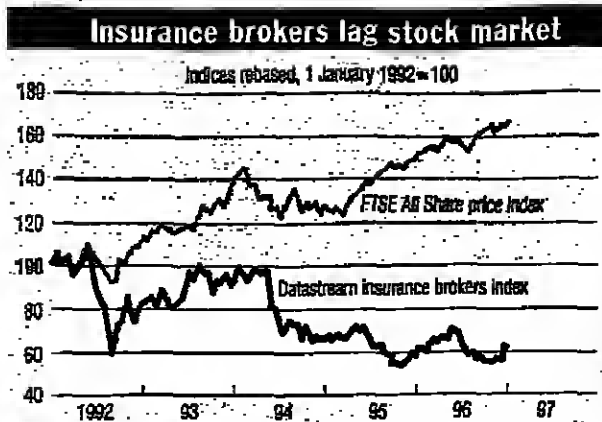
Insurance brokers have completely missed the stock market party of the last few years. One hundred pounds invested five years ago in the sub-sector, which ranges from the mighty Sedgwick to the lowly FWS, would now be worth something like £64.

The reasons for this dismal performance are not hard to

find. Normally a highly cyclical industry, insurance rates have been weakening almost continuously since the early 1990s. But whereas in a normal cycle weaker players would eventually be driven out, there has been less evidence of capacity cuts this time and the outlook is for soft rates to continue for the foreseeable future.

It was therefore with considerable relief that the market heard the news last month that Lloyd Thompson and JIB, two of the largest second-line brokers, had agreed to merge to create Jardine Lloyd Thompson. Expectations that that would be part of a consolidation trend appeared to be confirmed yesterday when two of the smaller players, Lowndes Lambert and Fenchurch, were forced to admit they were in merger talks after the latter's shares started to move earlier this week. Fenchurch, which traded at 49p at the beginning of the week, added a further 8.5p to 66.5p, while Lowndes put on 7p to 110p on the news.

Any merger is likely to be defensive, given that growth is more likely to come from cost-cutting and market share gains than any expansion of the top line. Tony Silverman, insurance analyst at NatWest Securities, expects market growth to be in the "low single-digit" per cent over the next few years. He estimates there could be scope to



market report/shares

Data Bank

FTSE 100

4056.6 - 30.4

FTSE 250

4507.8 - 9.9

FTSE 350

2021.3 - 12.8

SEAQ VOLUME

1.08bn shares,

43,668 bargains

Gilt Index

N/A

Share spotlight

Share price, pence

270

250

230

210

190

M J J A S O N D J

Oil majors give erratic New York the cold shoulder

The unpredictable US employment figures, which have achieved a justified reputation for tripping share markets, were at it again yesterday.

Footsie, looking distraught for most of the morning session, suddenly plunged more than 30 points as alarm bells echoed around the stock market about New York's likely response to strong US jobless figures. In the event the Dow Jones Average survived, at least during London opening, the jobs data in rather better shape than had appeared likely, so by the close Footsie's alarmist fall had been cut to 30.4 points at 4,056.6. The weakness of the Tokyo market was once again largely ignored.

Oils and power shares were oblivious to the machinations of US statistics. The prospects of more cold weather helped the major oil groups higher and it was the continuing takeover speculation, plus hopes of pos-

itive trading developments, which kept second-liners on the boil.

Cairn Energy rose a further 17p to a 485.5p peak although the headline advance of British Petroleum Petroleum Syndicate slowed with a modest 10.5p gain to 1,021p. Lasso was the day's best performing blue chip, up 8p to 243.5p. Panmure Gordon recently put a 30p valuation on the shares but any bidder, and there is a growing suspicion one might appear soon, would probably have to pay around 350p.

National Power and PowerGen, the generators, continued to defy gravity. There is persistent demand for the shares which can only partly be due to dividend yield considerations. PG surged 9p to 596p, taking it to near its year's high. NP rose 11p to 478.5p. Surprises were rattled by the surprisingly downbeat Argos



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

trading statement. Argos slumped 110p to 623p, unsettling Next, off 22.5p to 529p; Great Universal Stores 22.5p to 580p; Marks & Spencer 17p to 465.5p and Dixons 13.5p to 494p.

Lloyds Chemicals added 14p to 526.5p as one of the bidders, the German Gehe group, lifted its bid to 525p and moved into the market, building a 20.91 per cent stake.

Financials, on hopes of corporate activity, were strong with M&G, the unit trust group, 79p higher at 1,199p. Hambros, the merchant bank which saw off the unwelcome attention of corporate raiders Regent Pacific last year, gained

16p to 253p as SBC Warburg drew attention to its controlling stake in high-flying Hambros Countrywide. The estate agent was unchanged at 111p after climbing from 36p in the past year.

John D Wood, the estate agent, is expected to produce figures later this month; around £1.2m is expected. The shares fell 2p to 87.5p.

Fenchurch, the insurance broker, seems set to collect the rumoured bid. The shares rose 8.5p to 66.5p after merger talks with Lowndes Lambert, up 7p to 110p, were announced.

The proposed deal is the latest example of consolidation in

the insurance broking industry. More get-togethers are expected.

Ryland, the garage group, motorised 28p to 107.5p after reporting a bid approach and Arabis, an engineer and jewellery group which used to be called Exalibur, moved ahead 5.5p to 23p as bids talked opened.

Imperial Chemical Industries remained under the whip of the HSBC James Capel downgrading, falling 16p to 735p after touching 716.5p. P&O, on Kleinwort Benson support, rose 17p to 620p.

The market continued to awaken to the problems sterling's strength holds for many groups. Tate & Lyle was lowered 16.5p to 468.5p as UBS downgraded on currency concerns. The three spirit giants were also on the receiving end of currency worries. Allied Domecq fell 8p to 424.5p; Grand Metropolitan 13p to 432.5p and Guinness 3p to 436.5p.

NatWest Securities knocked Williams Holdings, the conglomerate, 7.5p to 336.5p by repeating its sell advice. It believes Williams sum-of-the-parts valuation is 317p.

SIG, the former Sheffield Insulation, rose 9.5p to a 274.5p peak. Buy circulars appeared this week from Teather & Greenwood and Merrill Lynch and a 280p agency cross intrigued the market. T&G is looking for profits of £33m this year, up from £24.1m. Last year's estimate is £40m.

Superframe, reflecting Dean Corporation's control of 25.8 per cent of the printframe group's capital, gained 2p to 20p.

Atlantic Telecom rose 3p to a 150.5p peak on ABN Amro Hoare Govett support. Fulmar, which came to market last year, gained 3.5p to 165p, doubling its turnover by paying £1.25m for City printer WR Royle.

Taking Stock

□ JBA, the software developer, is riding high, partly because it will make a killing contributing to solving the computer millennium problem. Kleinwort Benson is thought to have produced a buy note and NatWest Securities is also putting pen to paper. JBA, with US quota ambitions, should have produced profits of around £13m last year and £16m is likely this year. The shares, floated at 160p in the summer of 1994, are near their high at 641.5p. They would be higher if a US valuation was applied.

□ Shares of Paritco, the Coventry-based group ranking as the nation's largest car parts distributor, have accelerated as winter's grip has tightened. They have climbed 32.5p to 354p this month on thoughts about the damage to cars from road grit and salt treatment.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up 50 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: Ex rights = Ex-dividend; as Ex all = United Securities Market's Suspended Parity Paid on All Paid Shares; * AM Stock. Source: FT Information

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2000/97 High Low Stock Price Chg Yld P/E Ratio

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sport

AUSTRALIAN OPEN: Chanda Rubin made her breakthrough in Melbourne last year. John Roberts tracks her comeback

Marathon woman makes return to Grand Slam stage

Devotees will be aware that the venue of next week's Australian Open, Flinders Park, has been renamed Melbourne Park, and that if Chanda Rubin is allowed to park she is not readily removed.

Having built a reputation as the marathon woman of tennis, the petite American had the misfortune to miss the last three Grand Slam tournaments, the French, Wimbledon and United States championships, because of injury.

The problem appears to have been cured by surgery to remove the hook of the hamate bone from Rubin's right hand, and the delightful 20-year-old is preparing to outstay her opponents, though not her welcome.

Australia is her favourite place to visit, not only for the usual reasons ("its beauty and friendly people") but also because her debut in Melbourne a year ago coincided with her first Grand Slam title as a senior player, albeit the women's doubles, with Arantxa Sanchez Vicario.

It was the first tournament the pair had played together, and the wonder of their triumph was that the Spaniard could bear the sight of her partner after what occurred in the singles quarter-finals.

The organisers might have considered asking Rubin and Sanchez Vicario if they were willing to take out a mortgage on the court. Their singles duel, as enthralling as it was lengthy, ate into the night for three hours and 33 minutes – the concluding set taking two hours and 22 minutes – until Sanchez Vicario, the great retriever, was able to retrieve no more.

Rubin, the No 13 seed, hit a winning volley on her sixth match point to defeat the third-seeded Sanchez Vicario, 6-4, 2-6, 16-14, and advance to her first Grand Slam semi-final and to No 10 in the world rankings.

While digesting that, Rubin was informed that she had won the longest women's match ever played at the Australian Open.

Big deal. Rubin's second round victory at Wimbledon in 1995 against the Canadian Patricia Hy-Boulais, 7-6, 6-7, 17-15, stands as the longest women's singles match in Grand Slam history in terms of time (three hours and 45 minutes), the total number of games (58), and the number of games in a set (32). "In the last set I knew I just wanted to win, but I couldn't remember why," Rubin said. She added, "You push yourself and it allows you

to find out where your limits are, if there are limits."

Three weeks prior to that, Rubin had lured the Czech Jana Novotna into a classic capitulation in the third round of the French Open by fighting off nine match points and a third set deficit of 0-5, 0-40.

Last January, in addition to sharing the Australian Open doubles prize with Sanchez Vicario, Rubin had the distinction of being the only player to take a set off Monica Seles during the singles championship. But that was scant consolation for failing to secure a place in the final.

Although Rubin had not played Seles before, her aimlessness troubled the top seed sufficiently for her to take the opening set of the semi-final on a tie-break (7-2), and to recover

from a severe letdown in the second set (1-6) to gain the initiative in the third.

Rubin led 4-1, had points to break for 5-1, and served for the match at 5-3. At 30-15, Rubin went for an ace and missed. She also went for an ace on the second serve. The gamble failed. Rubin salvaged only two more points as Seles won 6-7, 6-1, 7-5.

Overcoming her disappointment, Rubin continued to prosper. In March she qualified for the Million Dollar Club in prize-money after reaching the quarter-finals at Indian Wells, California, where she wooed the doubles with Brenda Schultz-McCarthy, and raised her world ranking to No 6 by reaching the singles final at the Lipton Championships in Florida.

Rubin's fifth Tour final ended in defeat – as did the previous four, at Phoenix, Chicago, Los Angeles and Eastbourne – but on this occasion the adversary was Steffi Graf, who has a knack of confining their contests to a sprint distance.

"For some reason, Chanda hasn't played the best against me," said Graf, who has won their four matches in straight sets, with the American accus-

ing a total of only 14 games. "Steffi and Monica are both great players," Rubin said, "but Steffi's game definitely presents more problems for me."

One reason is that Rubin makes more mistakes when playing Graf. In losing the Lipton final, 6-1, 6-3, Rubin committed 26 unforced errors, five of them double-faults – although it transpired that her right hand had been damaged during the course of the tournament.

Rubin was able to make only one further appearance between April and November, the injury forcing her to retire after one set of a tournament in June. She underwent surgery in September, and reached the quarter-finals of the second event of her comeback, in Philadelphia, defeating the eighth-ranked Iva Majoli, of Croatia.

While Rubin inevitably experienced moments of frustration during the lengthy lay-off, her rehabilitation was generally hassle-free, in accord with the gradual nature of her progress from the junior ranks.

With Rubin, there is not a hint of parental pressure to do anything other than enjoy her career. Her father Edward is a district judge in Lafayette, Louisiana, her mother Bernadette is a retired teacher.

Chanda, along with her older sister, La Shon, and younger brother, Edward, grew up with a tennis court and a swimming pool at home. "We never had a need for her to support us," her mother says. "There was no pressure for us to rush her."

Nor is over-emphasis placed on the family's African-American roots. "We don't want to stand out from everybody else," Bernadette says. "We just want to be like everyone else, and we are, if you look past our colour."

The tennis court was Bernadette's idea. "When our house was built, I asked my husband to build a tennis court because I wanted to learn to play. He said, 'OK, I'll do that for you. But since I already know how to swim, I'm going to build a pool first.'"

It could be said that fear played a part in Chanda's gravitation to tennis as a five-year-old, but not in the usual sense. "I had fallen asleep in my house, and when I woke up, no one was around and I got kind of scared," she recalls. "Then it came to me. 'They are probably outside on the tennis court.' It was like, 'Wow, what a relief.' I remember walking out on



After missing three Grand Slams following surgery on her wrist, Chanda Rubin is hitting form again. Photograph: AP

the court and thinking it was a good place. Everyone was having a good time and I just wanted to be there."

In comparison to some of her American predecessors, notably Tracy Austin, Andrea Jaeger and Jennifer Capriati, the gestation of Rubin's career was type-free, even though she was ranked No 1 nationally at 12-and-under at the age of 11 and, at 12, was the top female US player aged 14-and-under.

That was when she first told her mother, "I wanna go pro," and received a very smile in response. "I think she had heard that phrase from a couple of the high school boys who were talking about football and basketball," Bernadette says. "We really didn't think she would stick to that idea. But sure enough, that's what she wanted to do."

Rubin was 15 when she did

turn professional, at the 1991 US Open. "I knew that I was going to turn pro before going to college because it would have been just too long for me to wait," she says.

Although a finalist at her second tournament, in Phoenix, she nevertheless continued with her high school education before travelling on the tour full time. Indeed, she elected to miss the 1993 French Open in order to march with her graduating class at the Episcopal School of Acadia.

By then Rubin's all-court style had established her as a dangerous competitor, one capable of graduating from the Wimbledon junior singles title to the Open fourth round in 1992. Endeavouring to maintain a healthy balance between professional tennis and life in general, Rubin has earned as much

respect for her work in the local and state community – conducting clinics, involving herself with a children's museum, the American Heart Association, Special Olympics causes and wheelchair tennis – as she has been shown for her performances on the court.

In 1995, she received the WTA Tour's Most Improved Player Award, and was named the USA's female Athlete of the Year and became the first tennis player to be selected as the US Olympic Committee's Athlete of the Month. In recognition of this, her home town of Lafayette declared 12 September 1995 "Chanda Rubin Day".

The ITF News observed that "Chanda is making a habit of claiming her own day at the Grand Slam championships". She certainly did that at Flinders Park, as the National

Tennis Centre was known for nine years until the Victoria parliament had the name changed to Melbourne Park on the day after last year's tournament, in order to accentuate the city.

Matthew Flinders probably would have approved. After all, Flinders was the English navigator who insisted on calling the continent Australia after it had been named New Holland by the Dutch and New South Wales by Captain Cook.

What's in a name? Lafayette was a French general who became a hero of the American cause against the British. And Chanda? A reporter telephoned the family and asked where the name came from and if it was of African origin. "We found that very amusing," Bernadette says. "Chanda is an American Indian name, and I got it out of a baby book."

Kafelnikov ruled out as injuries mount up

DERRICK WHITE

The world No 4, Yevgeny Kafelnikov, yesterday joined a growing casualty list of top seeds as injury ravaged the field before the start of the Australian Open.

Kafelnikov was forced to pull out with a broken hand, while doubts surrounded the fitness of his fellow seeds, Jim Courier and Thomas Enqvist.

Britain's No 1 Tim Henman, in tremendous form, will face home hero Mark Philippoussis in the opening round. Greg Rusedski must overcome the 14th seed Felix Mantilla of Spain.

The withdrawal of Kafelnikov removed a potential threat to the top-seeded world No 1 Pete Sampras, who was paired against a qualifier in yesterday's first-round draw. The defending champion Boris Becker was handed a tougher assignment against the improving young Spaniard Carlos Moya, who is ranked 28 in the world.

Becker, the sixth seed, lost in three sets against Moya at last year's Paris Open, their only previous meeting. "Carlos is not a typical Spanish clay court player because he is able to play on quicker surfaces, which is going to make it more dangerous," Becker said.

In the women's draw, the world No 1, top seed and overwhelming favourite, Steffi Graf, will play Janette Husárová of Slovakia in the first round. The Swiss teenager Martina Hingis, seeded fourth and regarded as the biggest threat to stop the German winning her fifth Australian Open, is in the opposite half of the draw, clearing the way for a possible final meeting.

Sampras and Becker were also kept apart in the draw and can only meet in the final on 26 January. If Sampras beats the qualifier and the next two matches go his way, as expected, his first seeded opponent should be the No 16, Alberto Berasategui of Spain, in the fourth round.

The former world No 1 Courier, the Australian Open champion in 1992 and 1993 and seeded No 11 this year, has a hamstring strain. The seventh seed Enqvist was struck down on Thursday with a badly infected blister on his right hand, and is also doubtful for the tournament. The Wimbledon champion, Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands, America's Todd Martin and the 1993 Wimbledon finalist, Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic, have already been forced out through injury.

Mark Petchey, the 26-year-old Davis Cup player from Essex, beat Australia's Desi Tyson 6-2, 6-3 in the second qualifying round. Now Petchey will meet another Australian, Lleyton Hewitt, in the third qualifying round. If successful, Hewitt will qualify for the main event.

Andrew Richardson, the 23-year-old Lincolnshire left-hander, joined Petchey in the third qualifying round when he defeated Mexico's Alejandro Hernandez 6-3, 6-4, and will now meet Spain's Oscar Burrieza for a place in the first round.

Sam Smith, the British No 1, beat Daphne Van De Zande of Belgium 6-2, 6-7, 6-2 in the first round of the women's qualifying competition.

Australian Open draw, Sporting Digest, page 25

Sampras squares up to Chang in final

Pete Sampras will be given a stern examination of his readiness for next week's Australian Open when he plays fellow American Michael Chang in the final of a warm-up exhibition event today.

Sampras, the top seed in the season's first Grand Slam in Melbourne, which starts on Monday, will try to prevent

Chang, second-seeded in the Open, from winning his third Colonial Classic title in a row.

Sampras, the world No 1, advanced without hitting a ball at Kooyong yesterday when the world No 4, Yevgeny Kafelnikov, was forced to withdraw because of a broken hand. "Michael is a true test to see where I am at," Sampras said of

his meeting with the world No 2.

"He plays very well in Australia and we will see how it goes out there. It's not a Grand Slam final, so I want to make sure I'm hitting the ball well and feeling fit and ready to go on Monday."

Chang, who lost to Boris Becker in the Australian Open

final last January, beat the German on Thursday in the other semi-final.

A fractured bone in Kafelnikov's right hand has forced the Russian to pull out of the Open. The exhibition event has been badly affected by injuries, forcing the organisers to call in several replacements at short notice.

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LINGFIELD	
HYPERION	
12.50 Perfect Pal 1.25 Slip Jig 1.55 Come Ten	Mannin's 2.30 Our Eddie 3.00 Lily Jaques 3.30
Pedal to the Metal	
STALLS: Standard.	
GOING: Stallions, except 61 (outside).	
DRAW: ADVANTAGE: Middle (best for 61).	
Laid-hand, all course (Bridgman's).	
Course is south-east of town on B2028, Lingfield station served.	
Laid-hand, all course (Bridgman's).	
CAR PARK: Car 50; remainder free.	
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CHANGES	
BLINDED FIRST TIME: Middle Express (2.30), Ben Lacy	
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sport

FOOTBALL: There is more to West Ham's hard man than short hair and long suspensions. Glenn Moore meets an East End icon

Dicks sets out to challenge the clichés

Julian Dicks? He's that horrible one. Why are you interviewing him? Reputations, once gained, are hard to shake off and my girlfriend's reaction is fairly typical where the West Ham defender is concerned. Skinhead, scourge of referees and fancy wingers, keeper of rottweilers and shotguns, lover of heavy metal, fast cars, Harley Davidsons and Arnie Schwarzenegger. The Hammers' full-back, it would appear, is a walking cliché.

It is an image which is dispelled as soon as you get within a few feet of him. Dicks is amiable and soft-spoken, with a enough of a West Country burr to recall his Bristol roots. He has done a few things he is not proud of, but, at 28, he has matured and mellowed. Still ferocious on the pitch, but more in control.

"I've been booked four times this season," he says, with a certain pride, when we meet at West Ham's snow-covered training ground this week. "A few years ago I'd be on my

'I was a bit of a bastard. Billy Bonds says in the book he wanted to chin me at times'

second suspension by now. The penny's dropped, hopefully. But I know the reputation will always be there.

"I used to come off the pitch and argue with the manager. It never got me anywhere, just put me in his bad books. Now I wait to Monday and if I've still got something to say I do it privately."

A few more contradictions. Dicks, a devoted family man to his eight-year-old twin daughters, is also a regular at local children's hospitals. He is a keen student of native American Indian history, is a regular golfer and, with his wife Kay, grows his dogs for show (though the rottweiler did have a run-in with the press when his daughters were being harassed in the wake of one on-field indiscretion). He is also capable of playing cultured football, especially with his left foot.

Dicks is now promoting one of the best football biographies of recent years. Unusually for an authorised biography, it is a war-and-all portrayal. He



Julian Dicks at West Ham's training ground this week, preparing for today's visit to Anfield and a game against Liverpool, a club 'I don't regret leaving'

Photograph: Adam Scott

emerges as a flawed but fundamentally decent human being. Just like most people, perhaps?

It is obvious that he is his own man. While more and more players go in for long stretches and light pasta meals before playing, Dicks' warm-up consists of two cans of Coke. Asked if he would agree to the Ruud Gullit regime if he was at Chelsea, he answers a straight "no".

More contentiously, he would give Glenn Hoddle the same answer. With Dicks' form rather better than West Ham's, Andy Hinchcliffe and Phil Neville injured, Stuart Pearce immersed in managing Nottingham Forest and Graeme Le Saux recently returned from a year's injury, he is in contention for a first England call-up.

Dicks is quite firm on this subject. "I don't want to play for England. It doesn't interest me anymore. If they rang me up, I wouldn't play."

Dicks' determination to speak his mind has not always been welcomed. His disagreements with Billy Bonds hastened his move from West Ham to Liverpool and a falling-out with Roy Evans led to his return.

Dicks is back at Anfield today. Liverpool are top, West Ham fighting relegation, but he says: "I don't regret leaving, though if Graeme Souness was still there I would be. I don't regret moving there either. I enjoyed my time there."

"I had got on all right with Roy when he was assistant [to Souness]. I played the last 10 games the season he took over. Then we got beat 4-1 by Bolton pre-season and me and Mark Wright were blamed. He had a go at Wright in the dressing-room but not me. Yet the next day the papers were saying I was unfit and overweight. If people have something to say they should say it to me, not the papers. I had a row with him and

that was it, he did not speak to me for 10 weeks apart from saying hello."

"He's a friendly guy and I like him. I've respect for him, but that's the way it was. He made me train with the kids. That was no good to me. So I'd go in and, after 10 minutes, I'd had enough. We'd start at half-ten, I'd be home at quarter past eleven - and I lived in Chester, half an hour away."

Short-lived it may have been, but the move to Liverpool appears to have been one of the two turning points in Dicks' life. Reading through the book, it seems he had reached a stage at West Ham where he had begun to consider himself bigger than the club.

"I was a bit of a bastard," Dicks admits. "Billy Bonds says in the book he wanted to chin me at times." Even worse, his wife indicates she was thinking of leaving him.

"He was absolutely full of

himself. I think he thought he was the best thing that ever happened," Kay says. "We had to sort ourselves out or I was going back to Birmingham to make a new life for myself."

Salvation came with the move to Liverpool. "When I was first here [at West Ham] I could be suspended for four games but the fifth game I knew I'd be back in the side. But at Liverpool there are so many good players. I never got dropped but, when I was out of favour with Roy Evans, things changed. It made me realise I was not indispensable. That's when I realised football wasn't everything."

The change was noted with relief by Kay and West Ham. "Some people did not want me back because of how I'd been," Dicks admits. "I didn't give a toss about anyone. I used to now with Billy, Harry, the players, directors. If I think something is right, and the manager thinks it's wrong, I'd tell him."

One of those on the receiving end was Lou Macari, Bonds' predecessor. In his case the disagreements became physical. "We used to go in the gym and kick hell out of each other," Dicks says. "One day I went straight through and I thought I'd broken his leg. But he always used to come back for more."

"He wanted us to play the long ball. This was West Ham; we're supposed to play football. He stopped us eating chips on Friday and having dessert. He didn't like me drinking Coke. I just used to do it behind his back."

The other formative move was Dicks' first, as a 14-year-old, from his Bristol home to Birmingham. He grew up living in the Knowle West council estate. It was a tough area, getting tougher.

"It's not the best of places and it was one of the reasons I did leave," Dicks agrees. When Birmingham came in, his

parents, like Alan Shearer's, left the decision to go to him. "If I hadn't got on in football I'd have ended up in trouble. I was put in a police cell when I was about 10 for about five hours. I used to nick stuff like most kids, but I got caught. It was frightening."

"They even took my belt and shoes off, anything I could hang myself with. It starts with nicking things but you don't know where it ends up. I was mixing with the wrong people, maybe I would've ended up in prison."

He mixed with some interesting people at Birmingham, too. The squad reads like a rogues' gallery: Martin Kuhl, Robert Hopkins, Andy Kennedy, Tony Cotnam, Mick Harford, Pat Van Den Hauwe, Mick Dennis, Noel Blake. Many of these were only a few years older than Dicks and he spent a lot of time with them.

"I was going round with the

apprentices," he recalls. "I was 14, they were 16, 17, 18. They looked after me when I was there. If I got any trouble they sorted it out for me."

"At Birmingham, I grew up very quickly. When I was at home my mum done my bed-room, my ironing, my washing, but I had to do all that myself."

He was also taken under the wing of Ron Saunders and stayed out of trouble off the pitch, though he was sent off for the first time while still in the youth side.

Seven other dismissals are listed in one of the more unusual book appendices (one page lists his games and goals; three pages his 101 bookings - just one for Liverpool - and dismissals). The worst red card was for elbowing Franz Carr in 1992. "I just knew I was going to elbow him. And that was it - off. To this day I don't know why I did it."

"I've made loads of mistakes. As long as you learn from them, it's not so bad. It just took

'Macari stopped us eating chips on Friday and having dessert. He didn't like me drinking Coke'

me 10 years to learn from them. I'm not ashamed of anything but, if there is one thing, that would be it."

Long-term, Dicks is looking to expand his interest in dogs, having recently gained planning permission for boarding kennels on his Essex country estate (currently knee-deep in snow, he is grateful for a four-wheel drive). He also fancies a move to Canada: "It would be great to live out in the middle of nowhere with no one around, no one to bother you."

First there is rescuing the Hammers, again. "We've been playing well but not scored enough goals - and, to be fair, we've let a few silly ones in."

And a closing thought: "It would have been nice to have played 20 or 30 years ago. You could get away with murder then, elbow people, everything. The game's changing for the worse."

Nice bloke to talk to, but I still wouldn't like to play against him. ■

Terminator: The Julian Dicks Story by Kirk Blows (Polar Publishing, £9.95)

No 200 TV v terrace

FAN'S EYE VIEW

by Simon Carroll

For those of us who consume much of our football intravenously hooked to the television, the Christmas feast was a pleasure. It was, in many ways, a traditional footy Christmas. The turkey - this year Southampton - was ceremoniously dispatched and will continue to be devoured until well into the new year; an over-indulgence of alcohol produced a certain amount of blurred vision, which may explain some of the refereeing decisions. And most of us have now seen the theatre of our early season dreams turned into panto.

Additionally, like many of the enjoyable excesses of the season of goodwill - and I do not mean the Tottenham defence - it has often been accompanied by the nagging of a close relative. For those who enjoy the carousal of the remote control, this means listening to the complaints of that insistent relation, the local terrace football supporter. Yes, heavens preserve the couch potato supporter from a righteous flogging by those radin phinne-in fans or good friends whose joy in life is to preach that theirs is the only true faith and to be a "real" supporter you need to have an umbilical cord attaching you to the ground.

Let us take this mentality to its natural conclusion. If supporters must come from a club's town or city then, logically, everybody and everything connected with the club should do the same. If being a local is the golden rule for following a team then it must also be a prerequisite for being on the pitch. The players should have been able to hear the sweet sound of the terraces roar as they emerge from the womb.

The same rule should also apply to finances. Sponsorship should come from a local firm and any cash should only be

raised within the confines of the home town. Thus clubs, large and small, should have the local pub plastered across their chest and, in many cases, this would probably be more appropriate than their current sponsors.

Yet these financial arguments should be put into context. Money is only important if the terrace supporter wishes to see their team to win trophies, or at least the occasional match, to see top quality players and sit in comfort while watching the game. Without money players cannot be signed, wages cannot be paid and stadiums cannot be built.

In this sense a team's television fan base is vital to the modern game. For many years clubs have been dependent on revenues from TV companies, sponsorship and advertising.

Of course, the terrace and television supporters have much in common. Most supporters pick a team at a young age and stick with that club, experiencing the frustration and heartbreak which that choice can bring. Both types of supporter enjoy the game, both passionately support their team and, in the age of modern stadiums, both spend their time on their back-sides as, in fact, we are all couch-potato supporters in 1997. More importantly, few of us actually only fit perfectly into either of these categories. Most fans of the small screen will also attend matches on occasions and 99 per cent of attending supporters also watch games on the television.

Now, in early January, the Christmas tree stands as bare as the rest of the season before us, its needles scattered at the bottom of the table like points dropped over the festive season. And as you swear your centre-forward fell from a cheap cracker, just remember, there is always the new year sales.

MAJOR WEEKEND FOOTBALL FIXTURES AND POOLS CHECK

TODAY		NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE		THIRD DIVISION		THIRD DIVISION	
3.0 unless stated		First Division		Premier Division		Albion Rovers v Alton	
FA Cup 1st Round		10 Bradford City v Oxford Utd		32 Brighton v Northampton		33 Cambridge Utd v Exeter	
Liverpool 2-1 Arsenal		11 Gillingham v Port Vale		34 Cardiff v Lincoln City		35 Carlisle v Torquay	
Man Utd 2-1 Tottenham		12 Ipswich v Sheffield Utd		36 Chester v Hartlepool		37 Doncaster v Colchester	
Newcastle 2-1 Wimbledon		13 Manchester City v Crystal Palace		38 Fulham v Darlington		39 Hereford v Mansfield	
Sheff Wed 2-1 Everton		14 Oldham v Huddersfield		40 Luton v Swindon		41 Luton v Swindon	
Tottenham 2-1 Everton		15 Portsmouth v Bolton		42 Luton v Swindon		43 Luton v Swindon	
Wimbledon 2-1 Everton		16 QPR v Barnsley		44 Luton v Swindon		45 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		17 Reading v Charlton		46 Luton v Swindon		47 Luton v Swindon	
Sheff Wed 2-1 Everton		18 Southend v Norwich		48 Luton v Swindon		49 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		19 Blackpool v Luton		50 Luton v Swindon		51 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		20 Bournemouth v Rotherham		52 Luton v Swindon		53 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		21 Bristol City v Burnley		54 Luton v Swindon		55 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		22 Bury v Watford		56 Luton v Swindon		57 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		23 Chesterfield v Bristol Rovers		58 Luton v Swindon		59 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		24 Gillingham v Stockport		60 Luton v Swindon		61 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		25 Millwall v Preston		62 Luton v Swindon		63 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		26 Plymouth v Crewe		64 Luton v Swindon		65 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		27 Walsley v Salford		66 Luton v Swindon		67 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		28 Wrexham v Notts County		68 Luton v Swindon		69 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		29 Wycombe v Peterborough		70 Luton v Swindon		71 Luton v Swindon	
Sunderland 2-1 Everton		30 York v Brentford		72 Luton v Swindon		73 Luton v Swindon	

TEAM SHEET

Aston Villa v Newcastle		Blackburn v Coventry		Leeds v Leicester		Liverpool v West Ham	
Last season: 1-1		Last season: 5-1		Last season: Did not play		Last season: 2-0	
Last five League matches: Aston Villa WLDLD, Newcastle LDLLW		Last five League matches: Blackburn LDWLD, Coventry WWWW		Last five League matches: Leeds DDL, Leicester WDD		Last five League matches: Liverpool WDWL, West Ham LDWL	
Villa defender Southgate is poised to return from an ankle injury. Draper, out after a hernia operation, will be replaced by Johnson or Curran. Managerless Newcastle will be without the suspended Lee while Ferdinand is doubtful.		Fittroft and Marner compete to replace the suspended McKelvey. On duty after a hernia operation, will be replaced by Johnson or Curran. Managerless Newcastle will be without the suspended Lee while Ferdinand is doubtful.		Molnar, a £1m buy-in from Dutch club Volendam this week, could make his debut as Leeds are looking for a defender. Sharpe may return after a groin injury. Leicester midfielder Lennon starts a two-match ban, while full-backs Parker and Hill face late tests.		Barnes returns after injury for Liverpool and Collymore has recovered from flu, but Redknapp is not yet fit and Rob Jones will be rested after his unexpected comeback at Middlesbrough. Bowen, Lazardis, Bile and Newell all return for West Ham.	
Middlesbrough v Southampton		Nottm Forest v Chelsea		Sheff Wed v Everton		Sunderland v Arsenal	
Last season: 0-0		Last season: 0-0		Last season: 2-5		Last season: Did not play	
Last five League matches: Middlesbrough DWWL, Southampton LWLL		Last five League matches: Forest LDWLD, Chelsea LWWD		Last five League matches: Wednesday WDDDD, Everton WDL		Last five League matches: Sunderland LWLD, Arsenal DDDW	
Middlesbrough defender Vickers has recovered from a knee injury. The Saints may give goalkeeper Taylor, a £200,000 signing from Barnet, his debut. Neilson returns in defence but Dodd and Dryden are still out.		Clough (ineligible for last weekend's FA Cup win over Ipswich) is expected to return for Forest at the expense of Phillips or Allen. Chelsea player-manager Gullit is out with an ankle injury after standing on a goalpost during training.		Carbone faces a two-month lay-off after a groin operation but Collins and Hunt are back in the Wednesday squad. Walker is doubtful. Everton defenders Unsworth and Phelan return and Grant should be fit, but Parkinson and Ebrell are more doubtful.		Sunderland gave a Premiership debut to 19-year-old midfielder Williams, a £50,000 signing from York. New Swedish defender Ennsson will be on the bench. Seaman, after 10 games out, and Platt return for Arsenal.	
Wimbledon v Derby		tomorrow...		Tottenham v Man Utd			
Last season: Did not play				Last season: 4-1			
Last five League matches: Wimbledon WWWW, Derby DLDL				Last five League matches: Tottenham WDDWL, Manchester Utd DWWWD			
Wimbledon will be unchanged with Holdsworth still on "leave". McGrath returns to the Derby defence in place of Sturges. Darryl Powell is also likely to start.				Wideman (flu) has joined Tottenham's sick list but Wersan has recovered from the bug. Swiss sweeper Ramon Vega is set for his debut. Fox is a doubt after twisting an ankle. United have recalled Cooke from Birmingham because of a lack of full-backs. Irwin and Phil Neville are ruled out, but May is available.			

Stakes are high for Montevideo match

Uruguay and Argentina renew one of international football's oldest and most bitter rivalries in Montevideo tomorrow when they meet in a World Cup qualifying match for the first time.

The stakes, always high when the old foes come face to face, have been raised even further by the indifferent form of the two teams in the South American World Cup qualifying group.

Only a few years ago both would have been expected to waltz through the nine-team group in which the top four qualify for the World Cup finals. But this time they find themselves slugging it out with the likes of Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Bolivia and Paraguay for a place in France - and neither can afford any more slip-ups.

Argentina are third but only three points separate them from eighth-placed Bolivia. Uruguay are level on points with their neighbours but two places below on goal difference.

Grobbelaar 'confident'

Bruce Grobbelaar spoke yesterday of how much football means to him as he prepared to play for his country in a World Cup qualifier - just two days before the start of his trial on match-fixing charges.

The Plymouth Argyle goalkeeper's next appearance in England will be at Winchester Crown Court on Tuesday, when he will answer charges that he accepted bribes to fix matches. He will be in goal for Zimbabwe against Togo in Harare tomorrow, but the court case, inevitably, is on his mind.

"There are things that have happened that people will realise at the end of the day that the real story is, and it will all come out in court. I am very confident," the 39-year-old former Liverpool and Southampton player said.

"Football for me is like a release, an escape. I can come out and play the sport that I love playing, and if you're getting paid for playing sport you must play it with a smile on your face."

Grobbelaar said the case had put his family under "a hell of a lot of pressure" and contributed to his father's death. "No one can tell me his death wasn't caused by this. It's very hard, but life goes on. I'm strong enough - I can shut it out."

Also in action tomorrow is the Leeds United striker Tony Yeboah, who plays for Ghana against Morocco in Accra despite only just having returned to action after a knee injury. "It's a life or death matter," Yeboah said. "It must be won at all cost. If it means I have to play with one leg, I will do so to ensure victory."

Orient's groundsman has no such luxuries: if he needs to water the Brisbane Road pitch he asks the local fire brigade to pop in

Kevin Keegan may have been feeling the pressure in recent weeks, but perhaps he should spare a thought for the groundsman who's been feeling under the weather ever since Britain's sporting calendar first fell hostage to the elements.

It's not just football which has suffered: the British Horseracing Board estimates that racecourses have lost around £3m of income. But it's ironic that football, which is so powerful as to dictate our heroes, our memories and our emotions, is still bought to its knees by the most basic element of all. Lady Luck may have a big part to play in football, but Mother Nature likes her say too.

Although several more weekends (not to mention the rest of the week) would be wiped out to make this the worst winter on record - that distinction belongs to 1963-64 when the

FA Cup third round wasn't completed until the end of March, delaying the final by a fortnight - this has been one hell of a winter of discontent. Not only has it given the lower division clubs a financial headache but it's caused further conflict between managers and referees. Wrexham's Cup tie with West Ham may have given Hugh Porfiro his first experience of football on snow, but referee Mike Reed would have got an even frostier reception from Harry Redknapp had Porfiro injured himself in the process.

There was a certain Irish logic in the words of the commentator who described the Racehorse Ground as being "insulated with a layer of snow". To paraphrase Brian Clough, if God had meant football to be played in the snow, he'd have bestowed more Arctic conditions on Britain than these.

But to criticise the pitch is not to underrate the efforts of the Wrexham groundsman who worked wonders in preparing it as best he could. As did the Old Trafford groundsman the following day - at least according to Martin Tyler on Sky Sports. It made Charlie Haslam chuckle. "No sour grapes," says Haslam, who has been Leyton Orient's groundsman for 21 years, "but he just had to set his dials, check his thermometer, then put his feet up. And at Chelsea they've got 23 miles of under-soil heating."

Haslam has no such luxuries: no underground heating, no tractors, no sprinkling. If he needs to water the Brisbane Road pitch he asks the local fire brigade to pop in. Which just makes the fact that the O's went 10 years, from 1983-1993, without a single postponement, and have had just one November game called off this

Olivia Blair



ON SATURDAY

season - even more remarkable. Haslam says his secret is "fairly dust... I have a drop of Scotch then breathe on it. Seriously, I work my damndest to get it ready. After every game we're straight out there to replace all the divots but we don't have

a roller. I'm the heaviest person who walks on it. We're lucky there's so much grass. It's formed a barrier against the frost. But our success counts against us 'cos they think we don't need better equipment."

Apparently the cold weather makes the grass "bleed", rendering it an anaemic off-white colour. But Haslam maintains that people get hung up on the state of the grass. "You can have beautiful grass but a bumpy pitch, the priority is to get it flat. But it's horses for courses: at West Ham they have short grass 'cos they like to play it on the ground. I remember when Tommy Taylor was a player here, he liked the grass long, so I'd say: 'Here, Tommy, I've left the grass nice and long for you,' and he'd say 'Terrific'. Our striker Billy Jennings liked it short so I'd tell him it was short for him and he'd say 'Terrific'."

Groundsmen are a strange breed, working all hours in all kinds of weather. Haslam hasn't had a break in five years, while Les Simmons, who goes out to grass this season after 30 years as Watford's head groundsman, has taken just five holidays in that time. If Simmons has his way, there'd be no football played on his pitch at all. He says it "breaks my heart when I see them kicking lumps out of my pitch."

By that Simmons means goalkeepers who mark their areas, of whom "that bloody Shilton" was the worst. According to Haslam, Shilton is still up to his old tricks at Orient, "but I let him off 'cos he's getting old." But don't expect Haslam and his fellow groundsman to show such leniency to the rest of the goalkeeping fraternity. The subject of keepers digging their heels in was top

of the agenda at a recent seminar organised by the Premier and Football League's Playing Surfaces Committee where it was decided that the only solution to the problem was to fine a manager £500 for his keeper's position. Apparently, marking the pitch is a bookable offence, but when referee Mike Reed claimed that "it usually happens when we're not looking", he incurred the wrath of over 100 irate groundsman.

They didn't exactly come at him waving pitchforks, but these groundsman certainly don't let the grass grow under their feet when provoked. Tom Porter, who tends the turf at Roker Park, was recently so incensed by a keeper digging trenches in his pitch that he rushed on brandishing a spade. "I told him he would make a better job of digging up the pitch - and he stopped straight away."

Little warns of a Geordie backlash

Graham Fenton and Alan Shearer, Frank Clark and Steve Stone. There were times during Newcastle's bitter spring when it seemed that Geordies were queuing up, albeit with heavy hearts, to bar their way to the championship.

Now, as Newcastle face life after Kevin Keegan, first in line to rub salt in their wounds is a self-confessed boyhood fan, Brian Little. The Astoria Villa manager was quick to warn against a backlash by the Newcastle players after this week's events, but his team may never have a better opportunity to break a sorry sequence.

In seven meetings during the Keegan era, Villa managed a solitary draw. Adding intrigue to a spicy plot, Newcastle's acting co-manager, Arthur Cox, performed the same role at Villa as long ago as 1968, while Tommy Johnson, Newcastle-born and bred, is in line for a recall.

There were some, this correspondent included, who argued that Keegan would have done better to spend the St James' millions on Gareth Southgate and Ugo Ehiogu than on Shearer. Southgate is set to return, in opposition to his England captain, for what Little termed "a massive game, one to sort the winners from the losers".

Keegan's departure prompted Roy Evans to suggest that for every 12 months in the job, a manager aged three years. While Liverpool still lead the table, their current form is as grey as the Evans barbet. Five

Premiership games bring together old friends and foes. Phil Shaw reports

points out of 12 over Christmas was followed by Wednesday's exit from the Coca-Cola Cup at Middlesbrough.

Victory at home to West Ham, who have won one in 12, ought to be within the compass of any side challenging for the title. But with Liverpool's resources stretched and Harry Redknapp's selection options enhanced since a resiliant draw at Wrexham, another attritional afternoon is in prospect at Anfield.

If familiarity breeds contempt there should be no love lost at either Roker Park or White Hart Lane. Sunderland and Arsenal, who drew in the FA Cup at Highbury and replay on Wednesday, also meet today when it is again the Wearside's good fortune to avoid the suspended Ian Wright.

The wry amusement Wearside is bound to feel over the plight of the grieving Magpies ought to contribute to an upbeat atmosphere on the Premier-ship's last remaining terraces. Arsenal are past masters at deflating such moods, however, and David Seaman's return could well have a significant impact on the title race.

Tottenham and Manchester United also resume hostilities tomorrow, a week after United's FA Cup victory. By further

coincidence they also contested N17's first fixture of 1996, Spurs' 4-1 success being their only win in the 14 meetings. On that occasion Peter Schmeichel played half the game carrying an injury and William Purner made a second and last appearance for United.

This time it is Spurs who field an unfamiliar foreign centre-back, Switzerland's Ramon Vega. Welcome though the arrival of any international must be, Gerry Francis' critics may take some persuading that the heart of the defence was a priority, particularly after the arrival of John Scales. Nor, one suspects, would they have been enamoured of the manager's view that Vega was "in the Tony Adams mould".

Alex Ferguson is repeatedly told he lacks someone in the Steve Bruce mould, yet United have kept five successive clean sheets. Recent evidence, notably the continuing lack of what Peter Swales used to call repartee between Andy Cole and Eric Cantona, suggests that lack of striking power is more likely to cost them their title than defensive failings.

Talking of pressure in management, spare a thought for Stuart Pearce, caretaker incumbent at Nottingham Forest. The protracted takeover struggle at the City Ground prevents his spending 60p, let alone £60m, a situation which could lead to angry supporters' protests at the game with Chelsea. And unlike Keegan, Pearce also has to play.

O'Donnell praised by Burns

Celtic face Hearts at Tynecastle today seeking a third victory in eight days, which would cut the gap on Rangers to eight points before Walter Smith's side face Aberdeen tomorrow.

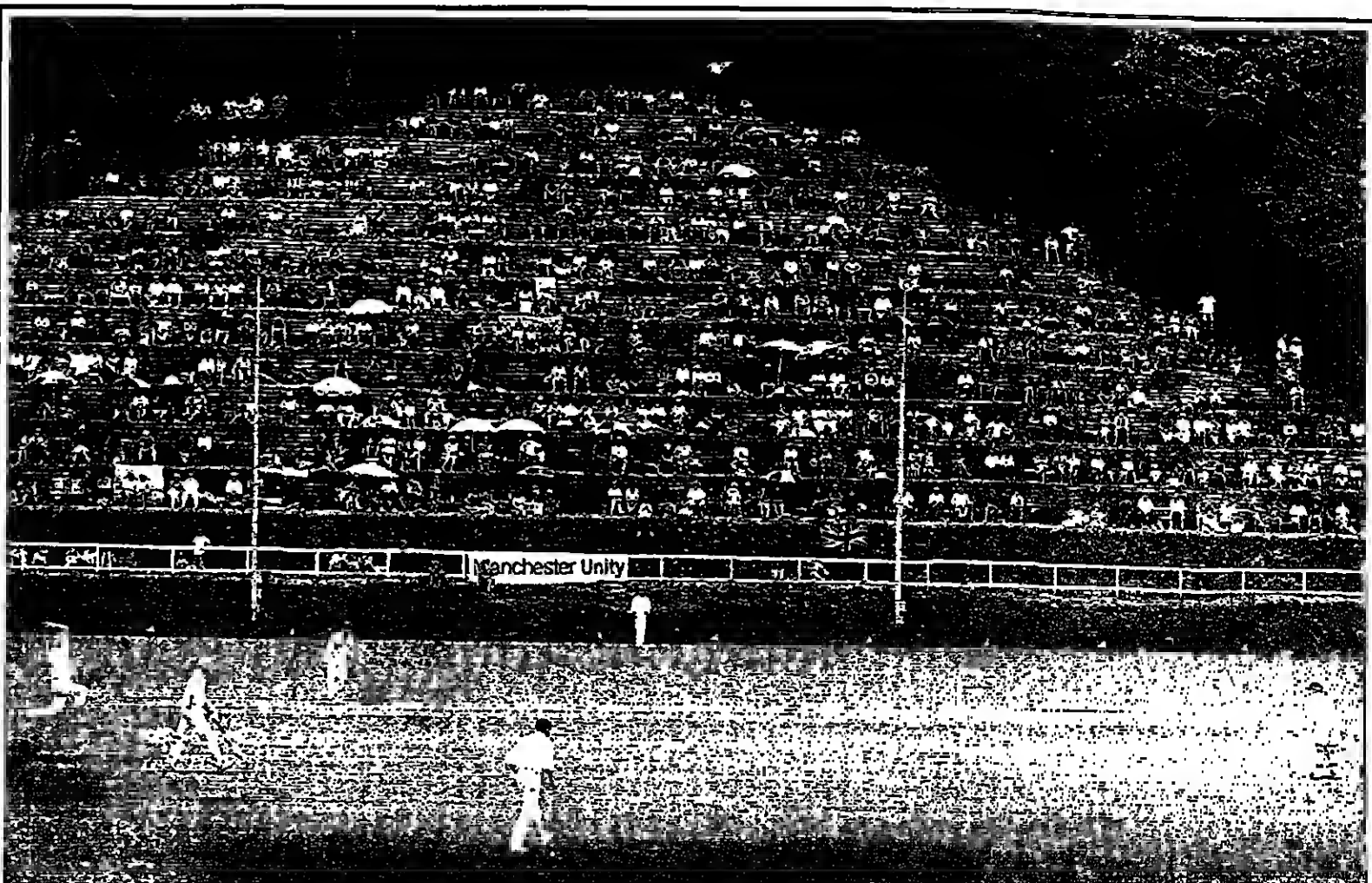
Celtic have hit 11 goals without reply since losing to Rangers on 2 January and their manager, Tommy Burns, has hailed the contribution of midfielder Phil O'Donnell, who has returned after four months out with a calf injury.

"He has been sensational since he came back into the team five games ago," Burns said of O'Donnell, who was capped once by Scotland in 1993. "We always hoped he would show this sort of form once he got a regular run in the side. He hasn't looked the slightest bit tired and he has a tremendous lung capacity for getting up and down the pitch."

Burns is without Alan Stubbs, Brian O'Neill, Andreas Thom

and Peter Grant as Celtic look for a first victory of the season over Hearts after three meetings. "The players deserve credit for the way they have lifted the fans since Ibrox - but that is our duty," Burns added.

The veteran Hearts striker John Robertson, who has a habit of scoring against Celtic, goes into the match two short of Jimmy Wardhaugh's Scottish League record of 206 goals for the Edinburgh club.



Ronnie Irani bowling for England against a New Zealand Academy XI at New Plymouth yesterday. The match was rained off. Photograph: Allsport

Indoor tournaments attract top players

Hockey

BILL COLWILL

Sensibly, indoor hockey dominates the scene this weekend, with the preliminary rounds of the English Club Championship taking place at East Grinstead and Worcester to find the last six for the National Finals at Crystal Palace on 7 February.

The defending champions Old Loughtonians, St Albans and the home side are likely to go through from East Grinstead although Reading, with Britain's goalkeeper Simon Mason on parade, could cause a surprise. At Worcester, the current outdoor leaders Cannock, with the high-scoring Bobby Crutchley in their squad, look the only certainties to make progress.

The enterprising Glasgow City Council's World Cities Indoor Championship today and tomorrow at Kelvin Hall is likely to be a sell-out with BBC Scotland cameras covering the final. With four national squads, including Scotland representing Glasgow, playing as part of the build-up for the European Cup in Lieke, next weekend, the competition is going to be fierce.

The Scottish champions Menzieshill, from Dundee, provide five of the Glasgow squad, including their captain, John Christie. Madrid, the Spanish representatives, include nine of their Olympic silver medal side and are the favourites for the final, probably against Glasgow, although Johannesburg could create a surprise.

Leopards and Sharks face fixture pile-up

Basketball

Sheffield Sharks and the Leopards, who meet in next weekend's National Cup Final, have to fit in three more games each before then as the demands of the Budweiser League and League Trophy gather pace, writes Richard Taylor.

Leopards must bounce back from a 17-point defeat against London Towers tonight when they face Thames Valley Tigers, who want the former Derby and Hemel American, Jason Simon. Sheffield are away at Leicester City Riders, whose coach, Bob Donev, has stripped their veteran guard Gene Waldron of the captaincy after the club ended a run of seven defeats with victory at Crystal Palace.

Criticised Radford backed by athletes

Athletics

Peter Radford was given a vote of confidence yesterday by the British Athletics Association, who went against the tide of criticism of the governing body's executive chairman.

The head of the British Athletic Federation had come under increased pressure from some quarters since he sacked his public relations officer, Tony Ward. There have been hints that a motion of no confidence will be put down at the federation's annual meeting in March.

The newly formed athletes' body has supported Radford in his attempts to reshape the sport nationally. "It is so easy to throw stones," said Geoff Parsons, a full-time director of the association who with Black negotiated a power-sharing deal with Radford and the federation. "These critics are fighting regional battles. We fully support what Peter and his professional staff are trying to do on behalf of British athletics as a whole."

The BAF has lost £750,000 in the last two years and their financial director, Steve Gledhill, is leaving for a job in industry. Mike Winch, a former international shot putter who sits on the federation's council, is among the critics. He said on Radio 5 Live: "The sport is falling to pieces. You see the quality of major meetings dropping, coaches and officials leaving and a reduction in the number of youngsters entering meetings."

Radford said: "From where I sit I don't see the bleakness."

Lehman in form at start of season

Golf

Nick Faldo shot an opening round of 72 yesterday to tie six shots off the pace set by the Open champion, Tom Lehman, at the Mercedes Championships in Carsbad, California.

Lehman's six-under-par 66 left him a stroke ahead of fellow Americans Paul Goydos and Jim Furyk, while at three-under were Fred Couples, Guy Boros and Justin Leonard. Tiger Woods led a group of eight players on 70.

The Mercedes is the opening event in the USPGA Tour's season, with the 32 winners of 1996 tournaments making up the field.

Lehman is playing as though there was no two-month gap since the last official event, the Tour Championship, which he won by six strokes. "I started slow and didn't feel really focused," he said, "but I made a bogey on the fifth hole and that got me back into the competitive mode and I made seven birdies in 13 holes."

"The key to the round was that I didn't expect too much of myself. I didn't practice that much during the off season. There was no pressure to play well, no huge expectations but once you start making a few putts the hole starts looking bigger and it all gets a bit easier."

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SNOW REPORT - in association with Thomas Cook Ski Direct

SKI HOTLINE		Snow reports	
Report	Comment	Area open	Last snow
ANDORRA			
Grand Rind	Fresh snow everywhere	100%	9.1
Ordina	Powdery conditions	100%	9.1
AUSTRIA			
St Anton	Hard base, some gully top	100%	4.1
St Johann	Hard base, gully top	100%	24.12
CANADA			
Big White	Powder machine/groomed	99%	8.1
Lake Louise	Powder machine/groomed	100%	8.1
FRANCE			
Val d'Aoste	Hard-packed lower down	20%	5.1
Val d'Aoste	New snow up top	95%	5.1
ITALY			
Corviglia	Much improved	100%	7.1
Corviglia	Great at all levels	100%	9.1
Corviglia	Great at all levels	98%	9.1
SWITZERLAND			
Davos	Lower runs hand-packed	100%	4.1
Grindelwald	Lower runs hand-packed	100%	4.1
UNITED STATES			
Massanutten	Packed powder	75%	6.1
Massanutten	Powdery conditions	95%	10.12

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Government claims war pension victory

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

Leaders of the Royal British Legion were upset last night at claims they were ready to run up the white flag following a meeting with Peter Lilley, the Secretary of State for Social Security, over cuts in war pensions. The Department of Social Security caused deep annoyance at the legion headquarters af-

ter saying that they had presented no expert evidence to discredit the medical findings on which the cuts were based.

"They didn't disagree with the medical evidence or the legal advice we have taken and they have gone away to think about it. Our position remains unchanged. We have taken medical advice and we are legally bound to accept it," said a DSS spokesman.

The Royal British Legion officially described the meeting as "constructive" but privately one source said: "We had our own medical advice and it changed. We had to take it on the chin, but it would not be true to say we have run up the white flag. We will fight on."

The Independent has learned that the Royal British Legion had planned to challenge the medical evidence produced by

the Government by taking three medical experts to the meeting with Mr Lilley. However, before the meeting took place, one of the key witnesses changed his mind after consultations with the DSS officials. Yesterday he was in hospital, and out of reach of the Royal British Legion, which is waiting to have further discussion before deciding its next course of action. The Government, however,

appeared confident that it had won its battle with the legion, which threatened to blow up into a full scale row involving Tory backbenchers when it was first announced late last year.

The row arose when the Government was advised that deafness could no longer be attributed to gunfire once a serviceman or woman had left the armed services. That resulted in a change of rules backdated to

last March, stopping war disability payments of £35m a year.

Leaked papers, which were obtained by *The Independent*, showed that Mr Lilley had asked for four further measures to buy off the pensioners' lobby in talks with William Waldegrave, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, including making a payment for funeral expenses for war disability pensioners costing £60,000 a year.

The disclosure that war pensioners were to lose their payments for deafness led to angry clashes in the Commons between Tony Blair, the Labour leader, and John Major, with Tory MPs protesting it was the worst performance they had seen from the Prime Minister in months.

The legion threatened to cause a humiliating climbdown in the cuts, with ex-service

groups warning that the Government would risk a defeat in the Commons. But the measure has been approved by order in council, and is unlikely to be stopped.

There was also a threat that the legion will seek judicial review but last night, Tory MPs were saying that they were "holding their fire" to see how the legion would react to the meeting with Mr Lilley.



Daydream believers back to pay the alimony and school fees

Louise Jury

The faces are familiar, but the lyrics will have to be changed. All four members of the Monkees, were back together monkeying around for the first time in 30 years yesterday.

But with hair greying and laughter lines a little more pronounced, the members of the one-time "young generation" of the sixties are now all in their fifties.

"Hey, hey, we're the..." they joked with mock memory-loss.

Yet there are rewards as well as disadvantages to the ageing process. Where in 1966 the Monkees were the creations of television executives eager not for a pop group but a hit series for the young, today they are the ones in charge.

"We ARE the corporation," roared Peter Dinklage, the one with mop hair, with a giant grin. However, Davy Jones, the band's baby-faced lead singer, said it was not the money that mattered. "It's a case of enjoying what we do," he said. "The rewards are quite nice, it's important for alimony and kids' schools, but it's not the main motivation."

Billed as America's answer to The Beatles, they recorded 52 episodes of the television series but also sold 16 million albums, 7.5 million singles and notched up hits including "I'm a Believer", "Daydream Believer" and "Last Train to Clarksville", in a 39-month career.

It ended when Mike Nesmith paid \$160,000 to get out of the group. Though Davy Jones, Mickey Dolenz and Peter Dinklage have reunited several times since, he had always refused to join in. Until now.

He explained his change of heart yesterday, at a launch party at the Hard Rock Cafe, central London, saying simply: "I just wanted to get back to playing."

Jones, Dolenz and Dinklage have reformed several times since, and toured Britain together in 1989, but Nesmith always refused to join them until last summer when all four got together to record a new album,

'We were all right to start with but now we're ferociously good'

Justus, to be released in Britain on 27 January.

On 7 March, they embark on a 10-stop tour of the British Isles and Ireland which continues in America over the summer. And a television special is also to be made.

Jones, the only British-born member of the quartet, said that despite the height of their fame being 30 years past he was still recognised everywhere he went. "People still sing 'Hey, hey, we're the Monkees' if they

see me in the street." Undaunted, he hoped the reunion would work out and that they would be seeing the press and public very many times.

Tork, jolily claiming the fame and adulation were the hard part, promised they would be much better than before. "We were all right to start with, now we're ferociously good."

Dolenz added: "There are a lot of people who have tried to catch the lightning and the bottle again. But it's a very tough job to do and nobody has been successful."

Ward Sylvester, their manager and the producer of the original television series, thought the Monkees reminded people of a certain generation of a happy time in their lives. But as the series was always being repeated, it was still capturing new generations. "They're remarkably evergreen," he said.

The Monkees only ever played one concert in Britain during their heyday - at the Empire Pool, Wembley, in June 1967 - but there is 300-strong fan club, Kirk White, 44, a London council worker and the club's president, loves everything about them. "The television show, the music - it brings back memories of the Sixties," he said yesterday, after nabbing a few autographs.

Another fan, Marcus Szabo, a postman from Chelmsford, Essex, was only a baby when the band split up. "They're just cool," he said.



Monkeying around: As they were in their 1960s heyday (above left), now back together and in charge of their material Photograph: Tony Buckingham

The old men of rock who just can't hang up their guitars

The Eagles

Asked whether the Eagles would ever reform, Don Henley replied "when hell freezes over" - the name of their latest tour.

The Rolling Stones

The Stones are due to tour the US this year. The nucleus of the band remained since 1968, when Brian Jones's death in 1969 until 1992, when Bill Wyman left to be replaced by Darryl Jones.

Yes

Despite numerous splits and reformations since 1968, Yes are to go on tour later this year with the line-up which brought the band its years of popularity.

Jethro Tull

Formed in Blackpool in 1967, Jethro Tull were performing right up to the summer of last year, when Ian Anderson collapsed in Sydney. The Scots-born singer and flute

player tore some cartilage when attempting a wild-man-of-rock leap off a stage in Lima, Peru, and his injuries led to a blood clot which threatened to block his heart.

The Everly Brothers

In the early Seventies, Phil Everly vowed never to perform with his brother Don again. But three years ago they made their peace on stage at the Royal Albert Hall.

Spice Girls are animals says the designer who wore no knickers

Michael Streeter

Fashion designer Vivienne Westwood, the one-time Queen of Punk whose eccentric clothes have stunned catwalk audiences all over the world, yesterday savaged the newly packaged Spice Girls pop group as "animals" with no style.

Ms Westwood, who once declared "fashion is about sex", and dressed the Sex Pistols in bondage gear, said that she was morally outraged by the all-woman band, who are currently one of the most popular and influential groups in Britain and much of Europe.

'Their dreadful clothes, dreadful look and no style'

"Those Spice Girls have never had any education, they have never been brought up - they have just been allowed to grow up like animals," she said in a television interview. "Their dreadful clothes, their dreadful look and no style. They are just cultivating this attitude that you should push your way to the top - it doesn't matter if you have talent or not."

The designer, who helped to

shape the look of the punk generation of the late Seventies and early Eighties, said that she was appalled at the way the group were being targeted at girls as young as 10. "What people are marketing is disgusting behaviour as a lifestyle. People should be outraged by it. I'm morally outraged by it," she said.

Ms Westwood told presenter Carol Smillie on BBC1's chat show *Smillie's People*: "I call it child molestation. It's corruption. I really want to attack what I think is corrupting the youth."

While many parents of children obsessed with the Spice Girls may applaud Ms Westwood's outburst, some found her attack on today's generation of pop stars ironic. One pop writer observed: "One can hear the clanging of an elderly pot calling the kettle black."

Ms Westwood's partnership with punk-guru Malcolm McLaren made her a controversial figure as she designed clothes for, among others, Johnny Rotten and Adam Ant. Even when she moved into the mainstream and became more acceptable to the establishment, she retained her ability to shock - as when it became apparent that she had not been wearing knickers when she received her OBE from the Queen in 1992.

However, last summer Ms Westwood, nowadays a keen



Shocker: Westwood outside Buckingham Palace

reader of philosophy, was seriously tipped as a possible candidate for the prestigious position of designer for Dior - an honour eventually won by fellow Briton John Galiano.

The Spice Girls, whose singles "Wannabe", "Say You'll Be There", and "2 Become 1", have been number one in 30 countries and sold 7 million copies in all, recently grabbed the headlines when - in an interview in the *Spectator* magazine - they described Baroness

Thatcher as their spiritual predecessor. The women, aged 18 to 24, also dismissed John Major as a "boring pillock" - although they declared that they would never vote Labour.

Last night, the band were on holiday but a spokesman for their promoters, Virgin Records, was waspish. "We do not feel it necessary to get dragged into an argument with a foolish old woman about the greatest new musical talent in the world today."

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Edinburgh nets £122m from M&S deal

Nigel Cope

Edinburgh residents are set to receive a late Christmas present from their local council following a major property deal with Marks & Spencer.

M&S announced yesterday that it is paying Edinburgh City Council £122m for the Gyle shopping centre at the western edge of the city. Though the

council has yet to decide how it will spend the money, it is possible that the proceeds will be used to finance a cut in the city's council tax bills. The sale would fund a £17 cut in the tax on band-D households. The council is due to discuss the matter next month.

Keith Geddes, the council leader, said: "It remains our priority to make sure that this

money is spent carefully to benefit the city and its residents for years to come and, vitally, to minimise the effect on our future revenue."

The sale could signal a new move by local councils to sell shopping centres and other property assets to fund the development of local amenities or cut council tax bills.

Under law, councils are

required to pay 25 per cent of all sale proceeds to reduce borrowings. The figure is set to rise to 50 per cent from 31 March. This is one reason why Edinburgh council was keen to complete the deal promptly.

The council admitted that a council tax windfall was possible but said that education and transport were two areas which have already been identified as

priorities. Another option being considered is to invest some of the Gyle proceeds in another shopping centre to sow the seeds of a future windfall.

Marjorie Kenny, a spokeswoman for the council, said there were also opportunities to help subsidise the many festivals which Edinburgh supports. She said the council could use part of the money to create a trust

fund which would help support events such as the Edinburgh Festival and the Science Festival.

She said the council would be keen to avoid developing amenities that would saddle the council with high future running costs.

Marks & Spencer said it was buying the Gyle centre to gain greater control over the future

expansion of its store which is the centre's anchor tenant. It said the move did not signal a fresh venture into property development. Though M&S did buy the Braehead centre in Glasgow where it also has a store, it later sold out to the property group Capital Shopping Centres.

Gyle shopping centre was completed in October 1993 and

attracts around 300,000 visitors every week. There are 65 tenants, with M&S and a Safeway supermarket the largest stores. In December, Edinburgh council had selected the Universities Superannuation Scheme as its preferred bidder to purchase the Gyle centre. However, the major tenants, M&S and Safeway, had a right to match the offer.

Widow's attempt to get by upsets Sir Paul

Marianne Macdonald
Arts Correspondent

Sir Paul McCartney yesterday defended his legal bid to stop the widow of his former road manager selling the original lyrics to one of the Beatles' biggest hits.

The newly knighted ex-Beatle tried to head off criticism after it emerged that he had prevented Lily Evans, 60, selling the paper on which he had scribbled the words for *With A Little Help From My Friends*.

She had hoped to raise £60,000 for her old age by selling the paper at Sotheby's, she told a BBC1 *Watchdog* investigation screened last night.

Her husband Mal had been The Beatles' road manager for many years and had been particularly close to McCartney. But he died in a shooting accident in Los Angeles 21 years ago, leaving her without a pension.

The Beatles sent her £5,000 at the time of his death which had been "most helpful", but she had worked as a secretary to support herself since and she could not understand why Sir Paul was stopping her gaining a nest-egg for her final years.

"I didn't know why he would want to do that. It wouldn't be for the money and he lets other people sell, so I don't know why he would want to stop me," she told the programme.

"If my husband had re-



Can they work it out? Lily Evans and her late husband Mal, who was The Beatles' road manager in the band's heyday (above) back in the Sixties. Main photograph: Daily Mirror

mained in his post office job I would have been better looked after."

Her son backed her, saying: "I think of everything Dad did for him. He'd be on 24 hours' notice and he'd do anything for Paul — he loved the guy. To do this to my mum now, I just don't think it's right. I don't think he

can have much of a conscience."

But in an angry statement Sir Paul said: "The programme is trying to make The Beatles out to be widow-beaters — nothing could be further from the truth."

"I would like to meet Mrs Evans and discuss this and come to some arrangement to see that she is taken care of and

that the lyrics are returned. They were never Mal's lyrics and therefore any relative of Mal's such as Mrs Evans does not have the right of ownership to these lyrics."

"To show how ridiculous this whole memorabilia market has become, there is someone in the USA who owns my own birth

certificate. How people can feel that that is right is beyond my comprehension."

"I am surprised that *Watchdog* is doing this report. I thought *Watchdog* was normally on the side of people who have been ripped off — not on the side of people who are doing the ripping off."

He added: "I don't wish to cause any trouble for Mrs Evans or for her children, whom I remember fondly, but I do feel strongly that these original manuscripts should be returned to their rightful owners."

Sir Paul's lawyers have taken out an injunction stopping Mrs Evans from selling the paper

until the case over ownership comes to court, which could take up to a year.

His spokesman, Geoff Baker, said Sir Paul had twice offered to help Mrs Evans if she was in hardship, but she had not taken him up on it. He was prepared to make her a "substantial" personal donation.

Cancer link at nuclear waste plant

Liz Hunt
Health Editor

Children who regularly play on a beach near the La Hague nuclear reprocessing plant in France are at greater risk of contracting leukaemia according to new research, reviving the debate about the safety of Britain's nuclear installations.

The study by French scientists suggests a causal link between environmental exposure to radiation and childhood leukaemia.

Children who visited beaches near the plant at least once a month showed almost a three-fold increase in the risk of developing the disease. Eating local seafood at least once a week was associated with a similarly increased risk of leukaemia. The children of mothers who regularly visited the beaches were also more likely to have the disease.

La Hague, on the Normandy coast, is one of only three nuclear reprocessing plants operating on an industrial scale in the world. The other two are Sellafield in Cumbria, and Dounreay on the north coast of Scotland.

Professor Jean-François Viel, of the department of public health, biostatistics and epidemiology unit in Besancon, France, investigated risk factors associated with childhood leukaemia in 27 cases in the La Hague area, and compared them with 192 controls of similar but healthy children.

While no link was found with either mothers' or fathers' occupational exposure to radiation — a hypothesis first put forward in 1990 — Professor Viel says in tomorrow's issue of the *British Medical Journal* that some lifestyle factors are associated with the development of the disease.

Professor Viel said: "On the whole, some convincing evidence is found of a causal role for environmental radiation exposure operating through recreational activities on beaches or consumption of fish and shellfish... but one explanation probably does not account for all cases, and other exposures such as radon may play some part, maybe even a synergistic one."

The public was first alerted to the existence of leukaemia clusters around nuclear plants in the early 1980s. The initial theory was that radioactive pollution in the environment was responsible, although the levels involved were not thought great enough to trigger the disease.

A study by Professor Martin Gardner then suggested that the children of men who worked at Sellafield were more likely to have leukaemia, following their fathers' exposure to radiation before the child was conceived.

Another theory was that the influx of new populations to rural areas to work on the plants may be linked with the disease.

The new study supports the environmental hypothesis and calls for more research to investigate sources of contamination, including marine ecosystems.

Branson says balloon design was flawed

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Richard Branson and his teammates revealed that they had been only a minute from death as their Virgin Challenger balloon plummeted towards the ground at 30mph early last Wednesday morning. Yesterday, the three men declared themselves happy to be alive and back in Britain, saying they had had "the most fascinating, mixed 24 hours in our life."

The men were only saved from death by Alex Ritchie, 52, who clambered in the dark onto the capsule roof and detached two one-ton propane tanks to lighten the 11-ton balloon and halt the descent. At that stage they were so close to the ground they would have been killed even if they had jumped out.

Mr Branson denied that the crash in the Algerian desert meant the attempt to fly around the world non-stop had been a failure. "It's not that important what we are trying to do," he said. "What matters in the end is that we're still alive. We find these challenges irresistible, but it's great to be home."

He again said that he would have to think carefully before trying the exploit again. Per Lindstrand, a teammate and the balloon's designer, commented: "Each time I have flown with Richard, he has landed and sworn he will never do it again — then changed his mind."

They blamed the crash on a fundamental design flaw in the huge balloon which meant it could not keep flying as the temperature fell at night.

Mr Ritchie struck a modest note, saying: "Maybe it was just as well it was dark, I couldn't see the ground. If I had been able to see how fast the ground was approaching, I might have fumbled things."

Mr Lindstrand said that the balloon's sensitivity to the temperature change as the sun fell was "quite dramatic". The lifting canopy, with a capacity of 1.1 million cubic feet, consisted of helium gas around a small hot-air balloon, intended to heat up the helium to provide lift. Although earlier tests by Mr Lindstrand on smaller designs were successful, the full-scale version had never been tested before this week's flight. As the team learnt, the small balloon could not heat the helium enough as the outside temperature fell below freezing.

Mr Branson said: "We know that fundamentally the whole concept works. The difficulty of heating the helium at night-time is the only thing that really needs to be overcome to make this work."

Mr Branson said: "As it got dark, the balloon started going down, we turned the burners up to try to heat the helium to stop the descent. That didn't work, the balloon continued to fall. We picked up speed, and at 10,000 feet we ballasted, and were rapidly getting through most of the ballast that we carried on board. We then started chucking out water, food and oil... And we found that we continued to go down. At that rate we were seven minutes from hitting the ground, descending at 2,000 feet a minute."

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Ritchie: Daring manoeuvre

Police 'turn blind eye to criminals'

Senior police officers are allowing criminal gangs to operate unhindered provided they carry out their illegal activities in other parts of the country, a Home Office report has found, writes Jason Bennett.

Researchers discovered that some commanders were reluctant to devote resources to investigating known criminals who were not causing problems in their own area. Examples of the practice of turning a blind eye were found in all three mainland forces — Surrey, Bedfordshire and Northumbria — examined. The study, *Tackling Cross Border Crime*, by the Police Research Group, highlighted the issue as

part of the lack of communication between forces.

From analysis of 16 forces in England and Wales, the report estimated that about 10 per cent of all crime was committed by villains crossing into neighbouring force areas, although in some areas it accounted for up to 25 per cent of offences.

It said: "... in one metropolitan force with an organised ring of criminals living in this area but who were committing little crime there, [police] were not prepared to utilise divisional detectives to investigate that ring, even though it was believed that they were committing serious crime elsewhere."

DAILY POEM

Woman in a Mustard Field

By Alice Oswald

From love to light my element
was altered when I fled
out of your house to meet the space
that blows about my head.

The sun was rude and sensible,
the rivers ran for hours
and whoops I found a mustard field
exploding into flowers.

and I slowly came to sense again
the thousand forms that move
all summer through a living world
that grows without your love.

This last selection from the volumes chosen for the TS Eliot Prize shortlist, presented by the Poetry Book Society, comes from Alice Oswald's *The Thing in the Gap-Stone Sile* (Oxford University Press). The £5,000 prize will be awarded to the winner on Monday by the poet's widow, Valerie Eliot.

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